

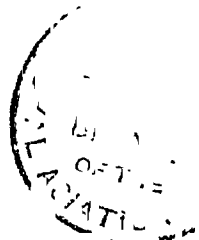
CO-OPERATIVE LABOUR UPON THE LAND

(And Other Papers)

*THE REPORT OF A CONFERENCE UPON 'LAND, CO-
OPERATION AND THE UNEMPLOYED,' HELD AT
HOLBORN TOWN HALL IN OCTOBER, 1894*

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EDITED BY
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PREFACE

Two closely-related problems press with growing weight upon the attention of all who are interested in our industrial and social growth ; these are the decay of the English industry of agriculture, and the persistent phenomenon of unemployment.

The decline of agriculture during the last quarter of a century has been rapid and continuous, whatever mode of measurement we apply. The fall of prices of English grain has, with two short periods of recovery, been operative since 1850, but the year 1877, the last year in which wheat was officially recorded as reaching 50s. per quarter, marks the beginning of the collapse which has ruined arable cultivation throughout the country. Rents of landowners and profits of farmers have been generally and largely reduced, and the wages and other industrial conditions of the life of rural labourers have made no such progress as is visible in the case of most classes of town labour. Two facts, however, relating to the character and quantity of land cultivation, mark with startling emphasis the nature of the change.

The first relates to the reduction of arable land. In the last two decades about two million acres of English land have passed from arable use into the condition described as "permanent pasture." Closely associated with this change is the marked diminution in the number of agricultural labourers. This movement, as will appear from the following statement drawn from the census returns, began long before the signal fall of rents and agricultural prices, but has proceeded with increased acceleration during the last two decades.*

Agricultural Labourers.		
1851	...	1,253,800
1861	...	1,188,900
1871	...	980,100 ¹
1881	...	870,800
1891	...	780,900

If we compare this movement with the growth of population, we shall find that during the two decades, 1871-1891, while the population of this country has increased 28 per cent., the number of agricultural labourers has declined 21 per cent.

The passage out of effective cultivation of large quantities of land of good quality and

¹ A stricter definition of the term "agricultural labourer," adopted in the 1871 census, is partly responsible for the magnitude of the decline since 1861.

position, and the progressive diminution of employment upon the land, are the two central factors in the agricultural problem.

It might seem at first sight that this was a natural and necessary result of the specialisation of industrial activity under the pressure of world-competition. The international division of labour might appear to require that England should abandon agriculture, and confine her energies more and more exclusively to certain branches of manufacture and of commerce, which require for their efficient execution the massing of large numbers of workers in our towns.

The domination of such narrow "economic" considerations as should break up our country life, and transfer an increasing proportion of our workers to a life of physical deterioration would, in any case, be open to grave question. It might, however, be expected that this operation of industrial forces drawing the workers into the towns would, at any rate, furnish a guarantee of sufficient steady and remunerative employment under town conditions. This, however, is not the case. In all our large industrial centres a large and to all appearance a growing number of workers are unable to secure constant employment, and their physique and industrial character deteriorate under the ineffectual struggle for a decent maintenance.

No precise or even approximate measure of the unemployed at any given time is possible, but we know that in addition to the displacement of labour due to changes of machinery and industrial method, and to the irregularity of employment inherent in the nature of "season" and "fashion" trades, the long downward strokes of trade-depression are instrumental in causing a huge waste of labour-power, and an incalculable damage to industrial character. The pressure of competition, especially during prolonged periods of bad trades, squeezes out of regular employment in the skilled trades large numbers of weaker or less fortunate members, who sink and help to swell the permanent over supply of low-skilled competitors for work. Large numbers of these latter pass out of the category of genuine workers and become loafers, vagrants, paupers or criminals, losing alike the capacity and the desire for steady and effective work under the pressure of the industrial forces above described.

The concurrence of these two phenomena of unused land and unused labour-power can scarcely fail to suggest the practical question, "How far is it possible to place this superfluous labour upon the vacant or half-cultivated land under such conditions as to make the land yield its increase and support the labourers and their families in decency and comfort?" Such action, if it proved feasible, would achieve

three desirable objects: it would arrest the further decline of English agriculture, and the further flow of rural labour into towns; it would restore to more wholesome conditions of work and life some, at least, of those who were not needed for town work; and lastly, it would reduce the alarming dependence of England upon foreign nations for her means of physical subsistence.

Many of those who have deeply reflected upon the conditions of industrial life have been struck by the comparatively slight advance which the associated action of labour and capital has made in agriculture as compared with manufacturing and commercial business. The isolation of small agriculturalists can scarcely fail to be a great source of economic weakness. How far can co-operative effort be usefully applied in processes of agricultural production, in machinery of credit, in transport and marketing? Much thought and not a little practical experience in these directions have been gathered during the last few years. Many societies and many private individuals have been quietly working at different aspects of these problems. It occurred to one of them, the English Land Colonisation Society, that a conference of those who had taken an active part in testing new methods of agriculture and land tenure, particularly in their bearing on the training and use of "unemployed" labour,

would be of service at the present time. The munificence of a friend of the Society¹ enabled them to carry out this design, and at the Conference held at Holborn Town Hall, in October, 1894, in which the English Land Colonisation Society, the Social Service Union, the Agricultural Banks Association, and other societies and individuals took part, the papers were read which form the contents of the present volume.² A full report of the proceedings of the Conference would have been impossible within the space at my disposal. I have therefore omitted several papers which were either not preserved or were not adequately reported. In other cases less important passages have been omitted, and over-lapping portions have been excised. The whole of the material has been re-arranged and re-classified for the convenience of readers.

JOHN A. HOBSON.

¹ Mr. J. Passmore Edwards.

² An important outcome of the Conference has been the formation of a Central Council of Home Colonies and Rural Industries, a short account of which is rendered in Appendix A.

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LABOUR UPON THE LAND.

CHAPTER I.

CO-OPERATION IN LAND HOLDING.

THE first paper contained in this chapter, by Mr. Winfrey, is designed to illustrate the progress, the utility, and the feasibility of allotments and small holdings in a typical agricultural county of England. The papers which follow contain examples of three different methods by which co-operative action may be of service in promoting the extension of small holdings. The Rev. F. C. Green illustrates the use of co-operation in the case of small ordinary tenancies, Major Poore in the case of leasehold tenancies, and Lord Carrington in the case of freehold farms. The Rev. John Burrows shows the advantages of corporate action, on the lines of commercial companies,

applied to small farms. In conclusion, a short paper by Mr. Moore discusses the practical application of these several methods.

SMALL HOLDINGS IN LINCOLNSHIRE.

By Alderman Winfrey (Chairman of the Allotments and Small Holdings Committee of the Lincolnshire County Council). •

The history of the allotments and small holdings movement in South Lincolnshire practically commenced with the extension of the Franchise to the labourers in 1885. Previous to 1885, they were practically a landless peasantry; but since that date something has been done to place them on the land, and to encourage them not to drift into our towns and cities. The following is a brief statement of the leading facts in their chronological order :—

From 1885 to 1887 we spent our time in *talking* about the advantages of three acres and a cow. At the close of 1887, I investigated the position, so far as nineteen parishes round Spalding are concerned. I found that in those parishes, covering an area of 143,576 acres, there was only about 130 acres of land under allotment cultivation—100 acres of charity

land, and 30 acres let by private owners—most of which was in roods and half roods.

On the passing of the Allotment Act in October, 1887, I commenced the formation of allotment clubs, with a view of getting the labourers to combine and make their wants known. Within eight months, no less than 1500 labourers had each applied to the local authority for an acre of land. But, after two years of constant application to landowners and local authorities, little progress was made. This brought us to the autumn of 1889, and to the election of a progressive majority upon our first County Council. With that came a fresh impetus to our work of seeking land for the people. Several landowners saw the wisdom of meeting the oft-repeated demand for allotments, and the rural and urban sanitary authorities began to move slowly.

At the close of 1890 I took another census of these nineteen parishes, with the gratifying result that whereas in 1887 the total acreage of allotments was 130, in December, 1890, it had gone up to 560 acres, and a good proportion of the new allotments were let in one-acre plots.

At this juncture, the Allotment Amendment Act of 1890, giving County Councils power to step in and supersede the local authorities in all cases where they had failed to obtain allotments, came into operation,

and we commenced to make the best possible use of it. The years 1891 and 1892 were spent chiefly in holding local inquiries, and in correspondence with landowners ; but very satisfactory progress was made all along the line.

In December, 1893, when I again came to make my triennial census over the same area, I was able to report that the land under allotment cultivation had increased from 560 acres in 1890 to 1152 in 1893. The committee are still prosecuting their work, and have, during the present year, added 172 acres, bringing the total up to 1324 acres. Speaking in round numbers, 2000 men have allotments to-day, as compared with 200 in 1887, though the rents are in most cases 50 per cent. higher than the average rents of the district. A large proportion of the married working men have now an acre of land each, though there are many single men whose applications up to the present have not been met.

The most successful allotment club I was able to form has been at Spalding Common, where we fortunately had Lord Carrington as a landlord to deal with. There are 60 members of the club who have an acre each, and they are charged the same rent as the farmer pays for the rest of the farm. It was among these men that the demand for small holdings first came, and it has now extended to

several other parishes where the men have outgrown the one-acre plots.

The Small Holdings Committee of the County Council set to work under the powers of the Small Holdings Act, 1890, but have only been able up to the present to deal with but a small portion of the applications. Unfortunately, the Act is permissive in its character. If the County Council can meet with landowners prepared to sell at a fair price, the Act can be put into operation; if not, the Act is a dead letter. Here again Lord Carrington came to our rescue, and sold us a small farm of 88 acres on reasonable terms. We have also been able to purchase 48 acres near Boston. Owing to the large demand, we have been obliged to let the whole of this land in small plots of 2 and 3 acres to 56 tenants, and even then there were many disappointed applicants. It will be observed we have put into operation *the letting*, not *the selling*, clause of the Small Holdings Act. We find that so long as tenants can be sure of fixity of tenure, they prefer to use all their capital to farm with.

I am glad to say that, owing to the favourable conditions of purchase, the rents of the small holdings are very reasonable, and certainly 20 per cent. lower than the average allotment rents. The demand in other parishes has still to be met; but cannot be met

until the County Council is able to purchase land in the open market.

The demand is mostly for 3 and 5 acre plots, but there is also a demand for 10, 20, and 30 acre holdings, and up to now I have not succeeded in carrying my colleagues on the committee with me in a scheme for the purchase of a farm of such considerable size as would meet this demand. Consequently, I have had to devise another method. A small syndicate has been formed, and next Lady Day we take from Lord Carrington a farm of 215 acres on lease, with the intention of sub-letting it in holdings of considerable size.

CO-OPERATIVE TENANCY.

By the Rev. F. C. Green.

Fourteen years ago I found the parish of Densmead (five miles from Havant, Hampshire) in the depths of pauperism. It was a "No Man's Land." Landowners, with one or two bright exceptions, were either corporations or non-residents. The old Common had been enclosed and appropriated from the labourers, who hence were unable to keep the cow, the pigs, or the geese of former days. The farmers were employing about one quarter of their former staff, while labourers who were of an adventurous turn,

and at the same time did not want to flock to the congested towns, had to pay from £4 to £8 an acre for bits of land of from a quarter of an acre to ten acres, in addition to rates, taxes, and tithe. All this time the farmers were getting the land at, roughly speaking, about 25s. an acre, and in some cases were to their advantage sub-letting the worst land at higher prices. The number of persons having parish relief was very large. Generally, pauperism seemed the order of the day, and independence an unusual thing.

Our Densmead Allotment Society has made a decided change. The start of this scheme was opposed with the greatest violence. The press was full of abusive letters, and its originators were in every way annoyed. The men who took allotments were to be turned out of employment and boycotted, and in a short time the workhouse—that place of dread to the honest agricultural labourer—was to be filled with them.

Things come to pass so very differently. Although hardly 20 men dared to join at first, we have now nearly 50 members. The society has hired a farm from Winchester College, and has divided it among its members in allotments of from one-fourth of an acre to from three to four acres, at rents varying from 22s. to 42s. an acre (varying according to the quality and

situation of the land), and including rates, taxes, tithe, management, and all out-goings. Out of this 3s. per acre has usually been returned to the men at the end of each year, and a reserve fund of nearly £40 has been formed to meet the landlord's demands for repairs to property at end of lease. The landlord has been paid frequently on the day the rent was due, always within two or three days; there is practically no poverty in the district (except that caused by drink or vice); and most of the allotment farm is worked excellently. Several of the men have started carts, and take produce to the neighbouring town. The work also is so managed that, the surplus produce thus being realised, the tenants are able to earn wages when the farmers want to employ their hands in the busy season. Those in the regular employment, earning say 12s. to 13s. a week, seldom take more than a quarter of an acre; but those who cannot get regular employment are glad of larger plots. The whole aspect of the village is now changed, and there is an air of comfort and thrift about it. A number of small holdings have also been obtained, in addition to the farm originally divided. The Ecclesiastical Commissioners have been most kind in that way. Speaking generally, the occupants of every holding we have are not only doing good to the land, but doing well for themselves.

Our great desire now is for another farm for the labourers to take upon the purchase instalment system, which we believe we could make also a great success. In order to prevent in the future the evils of sub-division and encumbrance, I should like to see one of the proposals made for remedying the law concerning land in Prussia (see "How the Peasant Owner Lives," Macmillan, 1888, page 5) brought into operation here, *viz.*, the registration of farms on a list of rural estates (*Hofen-Becht*), after which they shall be indivisible.

Such farms must be inhabited and worked by the proprietors, and cannot be either let or mortgaged. This, it seems to me, would be a safeguard.

We have also worked the boarding-out system well in with the small holdings here.

CO-OPERATIVE LEASEHOLD TENANCY.

The settlement which has been formed at Winter-slow, in Wiltshire, by Major Poore, more nearly approaches the system advocated by the English Land Colonisation Society than any work now in operation in England, and has up to the present time met with unqualified success.

In 1892 Major Poore (a Justice of the Peace, and

member of the County Council for Wiltshire) purchased a farm of 195 acres, situated close to Winter-slow, a village some eight miles from Salisbury. The entire area being more than was likely to be immediately wanted, 83 acres were sold off, and the remaining 112 acres were used by Major Poore for the formation of a settlement of small holders. The average price for the whole area was about £15 per acre, and members of the committee were appointed to divide the land into plots, and put a value upon each portion. At a meeting of those who wished to take the land, the whole area was taken up by nearly 50 intending occupiers at the prices fixed by the committee which they nominated; these prices ranging from £8 to £30 per acre, the latter price being placed upon the areas specially accessible to the village. Eight acres of land were taken up by holders who paid in cash, and the whole of the remainder was sold by Major Poore under a system of deferred payments, calculated at the rate of 10 per cent. per annum upon the agreed value of the holding. This payment, being made for 14 years, was found to provide the whole of the purchase money, with 5 per cent. upon the unpaid purchase money, at the end of each year.

Such instalments are not payable by the individual holders to Major Poore direct, but payable by them to the committee which was formed into a Corporate

Body with a nominal capital. They, in their turn, pay the instalments to Major Poore as they reach a sufficient amount. The title given to the small holders is a lease for a term of 2,000 years, granted by Major Poore jointly with the Corporate Body; the rent reserved under that lease being the instalments beforenamed for the first fourteen years, and at the end of that period only the proper proportion of tithe and rates chargeable upon the respective holdings.

The success of this experiment is undoubted. The majority of the holders have been in possession for a year and a half, and in spite of the bad farming times experienced last year, there is no instalment in arrear, while the instalments when completed will leave about £600 profit to be dealt with as the Corporate Body may determine; this being the excess in price fixed by the committee after paying all expenses and paying Major Poore the whole cost of the land and 5 per cent. interest thereon. But Major Poore not only had the idea of enabling men to acquire small holdings, but also to establish conditions which might have other benefits, and in this he has been remarkably successful. About ten or twelve of the holders are now erecting their buildings; a Co-operative Insurance Club and other means of co-operation are being successfully man-

aged ; a far better tone is prevailing in the village than formerly owing to mutual help ; and weaving and other industries are being introduced. Under the old system three labourers were employed on the 195 acres forming the farm, whereas now 50 men are interested in the same land, and conversation with any of them shows that they are thoroughly satisfied with the results of their organisation and the improvements which have resulted from the same.

SETTLEMENTS OF SIX ACRE FARMS.

By the Rev. John Burrows.

Two weighty reasons are alleged against the present system of letting land in large farms :—(1) The tendency to reduce the number of labourers to the lowest possible figure, often one man to every 40 or 50 acres, whereas nearly ten times as many whole families could subsist on such areas. (2) The tendency to limit the total amount of our agricultural products, because it is obvious that *extensive* cultivation is not and cannot be as thorough and productive as *intensive* cultivation on smaller areas. From a national point of view, with the possibilities of war ever present, it is highly impolitic to be dependent on

other countries for two-thirds of our food supply, which last year averaged nearly £4 per head of our population.

Hitherto farming has been carried on as a business, but the vast food supplies that pour in upon us from abroad have so affected the prices of our staple produce that the whole position is depressed to a degree; and even critical—and the worst has not come yet. The remedy we propose is to change the fundamental principle of farming, and, instead of it being a business on a large scale for the few, to make it furnish a *livelihood for the multitude* on six acre farms. On this area, thoroughly cultivated, surrounded by fruit trees, by playing the rôle of cowkeepers and pig feeders rather than that of ordinary farmers, and by buying and selling on co-operative principles, there is room in England for a million such farms. Training farms and allotments can only be palliatives—mere stepping-stones to something more thorough and independent. And if the grave exodus of the rural labourer is to be stemmed, it can never be by their return as *wage earners*; they must come back, if at all, as *independent cultivators*. Here, then, is a proposal which is neither supplemental in extent nor communal in its principle—but the old-fashioned English family life, each family established in its own cottage, raising as much produce as the land will bear. Co-

operation should be applied to pasturing, dairying, the slaughter of animals, and the sale of all surplus produce. The more this proposal is fairly looked at, the more it will be seen to have in it the essential elements of prosperity and permanence, and to adequately meet the needs and the claims of the working man. It means a comfortable livelihood out of the ground at a man's own door—just so much ground as is necessary for that livelihood, and no more. Let another family earn another livelihood out of the next field, and so on, until these settlements peopled the land with bold peasantry, who should be, as formerly, England's pride and glory.

“ Those were the days, e'er England's woes began,
When every *rood* of ground maintained its man.”

One of Italy's historians (Mommson) says, “ The plague spot of Italy was, as it had ever been, the unnatural increase of the mercantile, and the decrease of the rural population.” That is just our position and peril to-day. In the manufacturing world the working man cannot eat what he produces, but in the agricultural world he can, and that is why we claim for these proposals the element and promise of stability.

But what will be the cost of founding one such

settlement, and who is to lead the way? Take as a basis of calculation one farm of 350 acres (50 or more families). If purchased by a syndicate at £10 to £15 per acre, the land would cost from £4,000 to £5,000; but if a landowner would grant a long lease this amount need not be reckoned. Cottages, outbuildings, etc., £150 per farm. Plants, stock, seed, and capital on interest for first year or two, £100 per farm. Central buildings, *i.e.*, dairy, slaughter-houses, dépôt, etc., £2,000, or a total of £15,000. If a few gentlemen of known repute were to back these proposals, form a syndicate, issue an appeal for the necessary capital in shares and debentures (£1 each), there are many people in this country who would very quickly respond. Every day we see some company or other floated, often an outlandish quixotic project at the ends of the earth carried up to far higher figures than these, but here is one at our own doors, within our own ken, rooted in a common patriotism, and dealing with matters that are the prime necessities of life—and really our first line of national defence. The time, therefore, has fully come to give the country an object lesson on the lines of a settlement of six-acre farms, and we feel assured that it would, more than any mere palliative, solve once and for all the great problem of the land and the people.

CO-OPERATION IN THE EXTENSION OF SMALL FREE-
HOLDS.

By Lord Carrington.

I am one of those who are convinced of the necessity of supplying small areas of land to our rural workers for their own cultivation. When the suggested system of co-operative ownership was brought under my notice, it naturally, therefore, received attention ; and I was glad to be able to give facilities for having the system explained in my district. After an address by Mr. Harold Moore, I recognised the importance of the system, and the advantages which it possessed, not only to landowners who wish to extend small holdings, but also to the occupiers, by securing for them a perpetual title, as well as the many collateral advantages arising from co-operation. Unfortunately, however, in attempting to apply the system to a farm upon my estate, the difficulties arising in connection with a settled estate became apparent. Under our recognised system of English Land Tenure, an owner can by no means do what he likes with his own property, being partially debarred from the disposal of his land either for his own advantage, or for that of other persons. The

Settled Land Act of 1882 has given powers which formerly were not possessed ; but, before more desirable systems of land holding can be fully introduced, there must be a fuller and more complete reform in the system of our existing land tenure.

As the result of the meeting held at Tylars Green, near High Wycombe, it appeared that there were many who would like to purchase small areas by instalments, the total area so applied for being 83 acres. I found I was unable to arrange to gain possession of that extent, but by arrangement with an existing tenant I found it would be possible to obtain possession from Michaelmas of an area of 55 acres conveniently situated for the village. A committee was, therefore, immediately formed to acquire that extent. The difficulties arising from it being a settled estate then became apparent, for the trustees of my estate could not consent to a sale if the purchase money were payable to them by instalments. In order to carry out the proposal, it was found necessary that the committee should purchase the land, paying my trustees in cash, raising the necessary sum upon security of the property.

At a meeting held recently, it was, therefore, decided to complete the arrangements in this way : the land being taken up by 23 individuals in areas of from 1 acre to 3 acres each, these individuals together

forming a land-holders' committee. Four of these intending occupiers will purchase in cash, but the remainder will pay to the committee a sum at the average rate of £2 per acre per annum, for a term of 14 years; each one also paying a similar sum at entry in order to provide some corporate funds under control of the committee, and to pay the expenses of completion of the arrangement. With the assistance that I am personally able to give, and the cash which some of the occupiers are prepared to find now, the committee will be able to raise the £1,200, the amount agreed with my trustees as the purchase-money of the land. The annual payment of £2 per acre, or £110 for the whole area of 55 acres, payable for the fourteen years, will at the end of that time discharge the liabilities of the committee, as well as paying 4 per cent. interest upon the amounts owing at the end of each year.

The exact partition of the land to suit their individual wishes is now being completed. This is a matter concerning which some would think there would have been some difficulty. It has, however, been left entirely to the occupiers themselves; and, from what I learn of the results of their last meeting, no difficulty has arisen. The method they have adopted is to refer this question to a small committee of themselves, and this committee, by putting a rather

higher price than the average upon the best situated land, reducing the other accordingly, has apparently been able to suit the various intending occupiers. The plans are now being prepared for signature and approval, and the period of possession by the individual occupiers depends solely upon the preparation of the necessary legal documents.

METHODS OF APPLYING CO-OPERATION TO LAND TENURE.

By Mr. Harold Moore.

In order to introduce any system of co-operative occupation, the first step necessary would be to hold a meeting of those who desire to occupy land in any particular district. If at this meeting there were found to be a sufficient demand from those persons having the necessary qualification for the profitable use of small areas, a committee might be formed in order to consider the suitability of any farm of which possession could be obtained in the desired locality.

As soon as the committee had found a suitable farm, it would be for them to assure themselves that all, or nearly all, the area would immediately be tenanted at prices making up the total rental. If

there were sufficient definite applications from responsible and suitable intending tenants to render this certain, the tenants would at once be constituted into a Corporate Body under the Companies Acts, and arrangements for taking the farm concluded. The Corporate Body would act through a committee of management, who would have to determine the amount to be immediately paid to meet costs, valuation on entry, or other payments; and, on this being contributed by the individual occupiers in proportion to the annual payment assessed upon the area taken by them, possession of the property could be given.

If, when a committee has been formed, it was found that the majority of the intending occupiers wished to erect buildings upon their land, or for other reasons desired to acquire a better title than ordinary tenancy would give, the committee would consider the best manner in which they could acquire a permanent title. In some cases this might be done by the Corporate Body acquiring the title to the land subject to the payment either of a perpetual rent calculated at a percentage upon the value of the property, or of an annual payment for a fixed term, the period of which should be so fixed that the amount paid in excess of the rental value during the term would be the equivalent of the capital value of the property. • The Corporate Body thus having obtained the land, would

grant the respective portions to individual occupiers as they might desire. The exact means to be adopted for carrying out this method would vary in accordance with the circumstances of the owner, and the land to be secured.

The title might be given by a lease for such a term as 1,000 years from the landowner to the Corporate Body, and a second lease from the latter to each individual occupier. Both leases would either provide for the payment of a rent during the entire term, or for the payment of an annual sum for the first 10 to 21 years ; in that case free occupancy to be given for the remainder of the term. In either case there should be special covenants in the lease between the Corporate Body and the individual. These covenants should be those which appear to be desirable to secure the fullest liberty and advantage to intending occupiers, with all these restrictions which may appear to be beneficial to the community.

Thus, as the land is leased for agricultural purposes, the price paid would be its value for such use. A restriction would, therefore, be reasonable, that the individual holder should not use it for any other purpose without the assent of the Corporate Body, which, it must be remembered, would consist of the whole of his fellow-occupiers. It should be provided that the Corporate Body could have power to enter

into possession of any holding if required for other than agricultural purposes, upon paying the value of the holding at the time possession was required, such value to be settled by an arbitrator if it could not be agreed upon. A similar power could also be reserved for re-entry for any other purpose where there was a unanimous opinion on the part of the Corporate Body that possession should be taken of any particular holding. It might further be provided that no occupier should hold more than a defined area without the assent of the Corporate Body. Without some such covenants it is possible that in the course of time the various methods of co-operation introduced, and rendered practicable by the frequent meetings of the original Corporate Body, would fall into disuse, with a result that rivalry and competition would take place, injurious to the position of all who were cultivating the land.

In some cases a different plan might be considered more desirable. This would be a sale to the Corporate Body on payment of a deposit, the remainder of the purchase-money remaining in mortgage, to be annually reduced by payment of a specific sum. A deed of covenant could then be executed between the Corporate Body and the individuals, by which similar conditions to those just named would be stipulated as a basis for a division of the land.

Subject to the conditions of this deed, an agreement of tenancy could be entered into between the Corporate Body and the individual, under which rent should be paid for the specific term of years, it being provided that at the end of the stated term, and on the completion of the payments, the individual should have a conveyance of the land, thenceforth holding it without payment, but subject to restrictions named in the original deed of covenant. The annual payment secured under such an agreement would be the individual's proportion of the amount sufficient to pay the interest on the mortgage, with such additional sum as would, by being invested each year, make up at the end of the agreed term a sum sufficient to discharge the mortgage. On entry under this arrangement the individual would pay such an amount as was found to be necessary to provide the deposit on purchase and costs, this sum being proportioned in relation to the annual payments.

Leasing to a Corporate Body under the system advocated would be free from the difficulties which are encountered by a landowner attempting to deal on the same lines with independent tenants in respect of separate and small areas of land. The rent would be received in one sum as from an ordinary tenant, but with greater regularity; the instalments of the purchase-money would be paid in substantial amounts;

there would be security for the payments in the amounts agreed to be paid to the Corporate Body by the individuals ; and the committee, and the enquiries made by them, would ensure competency of tenants. Moreover, if this system be applied to letting land when hired by Parish Councils, the risks of applying the powers given under the Act would be obviated or minimised. Parish Councils will be most useful in the formation of such bodies of intending occupiers, whether they are formed to rent land from the Parish Council or independently, and the first meeting of the intending cultivators might be called by the Council.

Among the special advantages of this system to the occupier would be :—

(a) The assistance of co-operation secured by the committee both in working the land, and also in dairying, fruit preserving, and preparing other special products, and obtaining markets.

(b) The benefit of special advice, and of additional credit and working capital, that such a body could secure.

(c) The organisation of various rural industries, which are so necessary to those who are mainly dependent upon produce from the land, and which can only be introduced by such united action as the committee would secure.

(d) The persons to whom the annual rental and instalment of principal are payable being fellow-occupiers, if for exceptional reasons any occupier desired postponement of payment, he would have favourable consideration by the committee.

(e) Far more capital would be left to the small holder for the erection of buildings, or for other purposes, than if he had found the whole of the purchase-money of the land; and

(f) If the purchase of the freehold had been made, leaving part of the purchase-money on mortgage, any failure to pay the principal and interest due, if called upon to do so, would lead to the forfeiture of the holding, and of any money already paid for the same.

In order to make this system of occupancy more clear, it is desirable to take an example. Assuming that the land were of the value of £20 per acre, a charge of 32s. per acre, or 8 per cent. per annum, would be sufficient to pay 4 per cent. upon the unpaid purchase-money, and to discharge the whole amount at the end of a term of eighteen years. An individual occupier would thus be able to secure a perpetual title to five acres by making eighteen annual payments of £8 each, *i.e.*, £144 in eighteen years. Comparing this system with immediate pur-

chase, the value of the land being £20 per acre, to buy this area the occupier would have to find a sum of £100, and would further lose £5 per annum, the interest which this would otherwise bring to him, *i.e.*, £190 in eighteen years. As compared with ordinary rental, the amount payable would be in excess of ordinary farm value, but would entirely terminate at the end of eighteen years, when the holders would have a perpetual title to the land without paying further rent, *and yet this rent would be actually less than would usually have been paid for renting small areas.* By an annual payment of 10 per cent. on the purchase value, the purchase-money would be paid in a term of thirteen and a half years; or, if 6 per cent. were agreed upon, the term would be twenty-six years.

The total amount to be paid by the individual holders should slightly exceed the sum payable by the committee, this excess being necessary to provide for the costs of the committee. Any surplus, however, left in hand after meeting the costs, would belong to the general body of tenants, and would be dealt with as they decided.

CHAPTER II.

CO-OPERATION IN CREDIT AND AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTION.

CO-OPERATIVE AGRICULTURAL CREDIT BANKS.

By Mr. Harold Moore.

THE origin of the Agricultural Banks Association may be traced to a meeting held in 1893, when a committee was appointed to consider the desirability of establishing in England some system of Rural Co-operative Banks.

The committee so appointed consisted of Mr. Yerburch, as chairman; Mr. W. E. Bear, Mr. E. Owen Greening, Mr. Egmont Hake, Mr. Bolton King, and myself. After this committee commenced its work, it was joined by Mr. H. W. Wolff, the author of "People's Banks," and Mr. O. E. Wesslau, consulting economist, who had long made banking his special study. After consideration, this committee determined to form an Association in order to aid in

obtaining any fresh legislation which was necessary, and to practically assist the formation of Rural Credit Societies. The Agricultural Banks Association was accordingly formed in December, 1893.

∴ The work of the Association may roughly be considered under two heads, the first being the promotion of means to place additional capital or credit at the command of farmers who already possess banking facilities; the second, the provision of organisations in our rural districts by which those not now possessing any banking facilities can safely be assisted by loans of capital. As to the first of these two departments, it should be seen that, while the owner of a cargo of wheat on the other side of the world could readily get an advance upon it, it was unreasonable for the English grower not to be similarly able to obtain an advance from produce stored upon his own holding. This year early hops were sold at 35s. per cwt., one-third of last year's price, in order to provide money to pay the hop pickers, while wheat was forced upon the market in a wet condition, realising, therefore, less than 18s. per qr., simply because the growers were compelled to find the necessary cash to meet their harvest and current farm payments. The reason why local bankers cannot provide that adequate capital which is of so much importance to our agriculturists, is in consequence of the fact that no tan-

gible security can be given upon produce otherwise than by Bills of Sale. The committee has given much consideration to the fresh legislation necessary to enable our larger farmers to get more credit, possibly by establishing a form of security not now known to English law; and early in the current year a suggested Act of Parliament was drafted. In consequence, however, of the present state of legislation, it has been found impossible to proceed with any new Bill, and the further consideration of what can be done for the larger farmers has accordingly been postponed.

Practical action, however, has been taken in order to assist those rural classes who have not now any banking facilities beyond that afforded by a saving's bank. I may point out that in every European country, not even excluding Turkey, there exist co-operative unions or people's banks for the purpose of securing credit for those possessing small means, and that everywhere such banks have been recognised as having beneficial, social, and economic results. After consideration of these various systems, the committee of the Association decided that the system which had been most uniformly successful had been that introduced by Herr Raiffeisen. Credit societies on this principle are formed by the Association helping the federation of suitable persons who wish for the assistance of additional credit in a society with

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mutual liability : such a society being able to obtain for its members credit not available through individual security. The risk of loss is obviated by the societies restricting their work to a single parish, so that all the members must be well known to each other ; electing as members only persons of known good character ; placing the management of the society in the hands of an honorary committee elected from amongst the members ; prohibiting loans, except where some special economy is subserved ; and exercising control over the purpose for which the loan is used. It is found difficult to lay down uniform rules for all societies, in consequence of the great variety of conditions existing in English villages. The committee of the Association, consequently, determined to issue only an outline of the rules necessary to give a constitution to any society in accordance with the Friendly Societies' Act of 1875, leaving those locally interested to settle the detailed regulations. As the result of the consideration given by the committee to questions contained in many hundreds of letters which have been addressed to the Association, or which have been put to Mr. Leman, the organising secretary of the Association, a further publication is in preparation which will give more definite advice and complete rules of management. These are based solely upon the Raiffeisen system, which the Association suggests

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can be successfully introduced into every village in England.

The strongest criticism brought against the system was by those who urged that the restrictions necessary to ensure absolute safety are such that the assistance of the banks will be of but little value. In order to answer this criticism I may briefly state a variety of circumstances under which such credit societies would be useful. In the case of the formation of co-operative settlements, the utility of such an organisation would be evident. Every occupier taking up a small area of land as a member of such a community must, necessarily, have command of some capital. Assuming that double the amount could be successfully and profitably used upon any holding, in consequence of the existence of the society ensuring a certainty of the advance being properly used, a further sum up to an amount equal to the sum employed by any holder could be lent with safety, because this maximum advance would only then equal one-half of the total amount invested in the holding. The experience of the Agricultural Banks Association shows that there are men of wealth prepared to come forward in our local districts to find any sums of money required under these conditions. Then such credit societies would be of value to those in our villages, to whose income the temporary possession of additional capital

would make a material increase. Instances may be given of the village carpenter who might, through such help, be enabled to buy materials for a contract, which would otherwise have to go to a bigger man possessing larger means; and of the rural manufacturers, such as hurdle or chair makers, who must limit the purchase of the rough material to the resources they have at command, and to whom additional money would allow such larger purchases as might mean constant employment all through the winter. Then there are many in our large villages who have some regular means of maintenance, wage-earning or other, but have ample spare time and the necessary experience which would enable them to keep a cow, goats, pigs, or other live stock. In these cases some are prepared to find one-half the capital wanted, but at present, through want of the other half, are unable to get this additional means of livelihood. Lastly, there are instances where the County Council classes for technical instruction have been doing some good in giving training in rural industries, but, where practical application is impossible without capital. Loans of even so little as £1 to £2 have been proved to be of great value to some members of the families of wage-earning rural labourers, the amounts being expended in the purchase of raw materials necessary for production of articles for sale

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at prices which would give remuneration for the skill and labour expended. For borrowers of these small sums possessing no means, sureties would be necessary ; but here there should be little difficulty, bearing in mind the large numbers of persons who are increasingly interested in promoting profitable village industries.

In conclusion, I may point out that of the many hundreds who have expressed the greatest interest in the work of the Association, comparatively few have recognised one method of showing practical sympathy in its work, *viz.*, that of finding some part of the cost; and had it not been for the most munificent support of Mr. Yerburgh, the society could not have done what it has already accomplished.

AN EXPERIMENT IN AGRICULTURAL CREDIT BANKS.

By Mr. W. Malden, M.D.

In the parish of Pembury, near Tunbridge Wells, Kent, an agricultural credit bank has been started. The idea was suggested to me by Mr. Wolff's book on People's Banks. When conversing with the working men on the subject, I found they were much interested ; so, at their request, I gave a lecture dealing chiefly with the German Raiffeisen banks. At the close, a provisional committee was appointed to

consider if it was possible to establish a village bank in Pembury. The committee met frequently, and drew up rules founded on the Raiffeisen societies. A second public meeting was called in August, and the rules were read and explained. Intending members were invited to send in their names, and 20 names, representing all classes in the parish, were given in at the close of the meeting.

About this time I received an account of the work of the Agricultural Banks Association, and a copy of their model rules. At our first general meeting these rules were read, and it was resolved to affiliate ourselves to the Association, and adopt their rules. This has been done. We now muster 28 members; two of these are women. An office has been taken, and officers appointed; the vicar and the Nonconformist minister serving as trustees. A guarantee of £200 was raised to start with, and doubtless more money will be forthcoming if it is required. We have decided to charge interest at the rate of 5 per cent. on all loans, and to allow 3 per cent. for deposits. We have also decided to form a cattle insurance department, in which all cattle purchased with money lent by the bank must be insured.

I have no doubt that credit banks of this description will prove of great value in the rural districts. The agricultural labourers are very anxious to try

their hands with large allotments or small holdings ; but at present they are absolutely without the money or credit necessary to make the working of them a success. This credit, by means of agricultural co-operative banks, they will be able to obtain, and so the great initial difficulty in establishing small holders will be removed.

CO-OPERATION IN IRELAND.

By the Hon. Horace Plunkett.

The year 1894 has seen the inauguration of a scheme calculated to bring about important changes in the condition of Irish agriculture. In the spring the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society issued its prospectus. During the early summer its proposals were discussed at public meetings and in the press. The number of its adherents rapidly increased. Most of the required funds were subscribed. As strong a committee as Irish public life could produce was entrusted with the carrying out of the programme for the first year ; and whatever may be the permanent result, the task of introducing new principles into the business of the Irish farmer has been entered upon with energy and determination.

I shall deal with the principles mainly, leaving the

greater part of the practical details to be filled in by each agricultural reader from the teachings of his own experience.

The distinguishing characteristic of the new Society is that it is to be temporary in its work, being constituted for a term of five years, and purely propagandist. The greatest requirement in Ireland is the establishment, by organisation of the farmers themselves, of a Central Chamber of Agriculture, which would, in one important respect, differ from an Agricultural Department. The latter could not well act in any way which would interfere between the agricultural and general commercial or trading interests. It could not act as the much-needed trade combination representing the farming industry. Interference with trade by the Government must be very limited. An Agricultural Department is badly wanted in Ireland to simplify and co-ordinate the work done by several existing Boards. It would be occupied in the performance of certain duties which the State can do better and more economically than any association of individuals, such as the dissemination of information, agricultural education, safeguards against disease, and so forth. The Central Chamber would doubtless exercise a wholesome influence on the Government Department, and would keep it in touch with the interests it was created to conserve.

But a wide sphere of usefulness of another kind is contemplated.

The whole question of freight and transit of Irish agricultural produce needs a central organisation representing the producers. Local combination can do much—can at least teach the poor farmers to bulk their consignments, and to make such terms with the railways from their several districts as will enable the poor man to do as well as the rich man. But by far the greater part of these products find their way to England ; and it will need more than the influence of local farming societies to obtain through rates and suitable arrangements between such points as Ballinasloe and London, or Limerick and Manchester.

The remaining functions of the Central Chamber will consist in carrying further, with all the weight of its representative character, the work upon which our Society is now, pending the constitution of this Farmers' Federation, temporarily engaged. This work chiefly consists in the organisation of Farmers' Societies, covering convenient areas. These Societies, it will be remembered, are to be the foundation upon which the central body is to be built ; and upon the practicability of so organising them as to give them permanence the success of our entire scheme depends. At present all that has been accomplished is the

formation of a few Societies, and the dissemination of the knowledge of the scheme.

Our Society is managed by a committee of twelve, with a president and vice-president. They have under their direction an organising secretary, with a small staff of organisers, the latter being paid by the job. These organisers are sent among the farmers of any district where the committee think their proposals would obtain a hearing. The district selected is one where farming operations are now carried on by individual farmers without any union or combination.

Most valuable work is being done in the dairying districts, where a few forerunners of the new Society had already persuaded the farmers to show what combination could effect. The success of this experiment had exercised such an influence on the manner in which the Society's proposals have been received, that some allusion to it is of interest.

The dairying industry just then possessed all these requisites, and had the additional advantage of being one of prime national importance. Ireland, by virtue of its unrivalled soil and climate, was once the greatest butter-producing country in the world. In the last twenty years she has fallen behind in the race, even to the extent of being beaten out of her home markets. The reason is well known. Like most

large industries, that of butter-making has had its revolution. New machinery, costly but highly efficient, has enabled the factory product, notably that of Denmark and Sweden, to beat the home-made article both in quality and cost of production. After a while, capital was naturally attracted by the material advantages which the abundant supply of Irish milk afforded, and the green pastures of the "Golden Vein" were studded by the snow-white "creameries" which announced the transfer of this great Irish industry from the tiller of the soil to the man of commerce. The new-comers were able to secure the milk of the district at a price equivalent to its then value to the belated farmer, who deemed it advantage enough that he was saved the trouble of churning, while they (the proprietors) realised enormous profits. Here was, at any rate, a definite substantial object for which to combine. The farmers had only to put together what money they could contribute and what credit they could command, to associate themselves into societies, and then, by means of co-operative organisation, to conduct their own business for their own profit.¹

It is sufficient to state that the undertaking then entered upon has been vigorously prosecuted for the last five years, and is now the special care of the

¹ *Fortnightly Review*, March, 1894.

Organising Society. To-day, forty-two societies (thirty-three parent societies with nine "auxiliaries" or branches) are at work, while several others are in process of organisation. This success has astonished all who have watched their progress—for not only have they conducted the industry in a thoroughly business-like manner, but they have also overcome the technical difficulties, and succeeded in restoring Irish butter to the place which it formerly occupied in the English markets.

In this venture the Irish dairy farmers, following the lead of their Continental competitors, had, by means of combination, accomplished an object which was beyond the reach of the individual. Still more significant, as showing how quickly one step forward in social and economic progress leads to another, was the next development of co-operation. These societies had solved the problem of economic production, but they were still almost as much at the mercy of the middleman as their members had formerly been in the sale of their product. During the last two years, however, they have formed a federation of the Co-operative Creameries, under the name of the *Irish Co-operative Agency Society, Limited*, which undertakes the collection of their butter in Ireland, and its consignment to and sale in the English markets. Its committee, consisting of members of the various

federated societies, had no special knowledge of the markets in which they hoped to supersede the middleman, and to represent the interest of the farmer. They were subjected to some litigation, resulting in a considerable financial loss. But they retained the confidence of their fellow members, who were determined to give the experiment a fair trial. Already their losses have been recouped, and the venture promises to be an unqualified success. The agency is now branching out into other lines of business for the societies, the most useful being the sale of poultry and eggs.

The creamery system is, of course, only applicable to a limited area. In non-dairying districts combination can be advantageously resorted to for many other purposes. There is hardly a parish in Ireland where farmers could not obtain better and cheaper implements and machinery, manures, seeds, feeding stuffs, in fact all kinds of farming requisites, by a simple system of joint purchase. No doubt, later on, the farmers would have depôts of their own. But at first societies might be formed on the French plan thus described in the latest Government publication on agricultural subjects:¹ "The procedure is practically the same in all cases. Invoices are checked

¹ *Journal of Board of Agriculture*, vol. i., No. i., September, 1894, pp. 9, 10.

and passed by the council of the syndicate, and bills are drawn by the manufacturers and tradesmen on the individual members for goods supplied. If it is found necessary to take proceedings against a manufacturer for fraud, these are generally instituted by, and at the expense of, the syndicate, but in the name of the aggrieved member. Few of the associations undertake responsibility in respect of payment for goods ordered on behalf of the members. As a rule, the manufacturer or dealer has to draw a bill, sometimes for an insignificant sum, payable at one, two, or three months, on each individual who sent in an order." Then follows a very significant testimony to the combined moral and economical advantage of this form of association :¹ " Although the syndicates offer no material security to the trade, their reputation for soundness in business affairs is in itself a moral guarantee. It very rarely happens that a farmer fails to meet an engagement contracted through his syndicate, for default invariably entails expulsion. It has been maintained that the system of purchase in common, inaugurated by the syndicates, has had the effect of reducing the prices of manures and other articles used in agriculture by 20 to 30 per cent."²

¹ *Journal of Board of Agriculture*, vol. i., No. i., September, 1894, pp. 9, 10.

² *Journal of Board of Agriculture*, vol. i., No. i., September, 1894, pp. 10, 11.

The co-operative sale of live stock and farm produce is a more difficult matter; and here foreign experience is not quite so good a guide as it is in the details of co-operative purchase. The *Syndicates Agricoles* of France have federated for the sale of live stock, much as the Irish creameries have federated for the sale of their butter.

The insurance of crops and live stock is not practised to the extent which prudence would dictate. This will be remedied with general progress; and we have no doubt that our local societies will be able to obtain cheaper rates from insurance companies, and probably to escape the agency fees altogether from the start.

Regarding the subject of agricultural finance, I can testify that the Irish farmer is under the same disadvantages in the matter of working capital as the English. We have no lack of competing banks, and money lenders abound. Money is easily obtainable with bankable security at fair rates of interest, but usually for short terms. Renewals are granted as a rule, but where there is no bankable security, the borrower is, as a natural consequence, subjected to usury, sometimes at the hands of the gombeen man • pure and simple, but more often in the worse, because indefinite, form of shop credit. Thus it happens that credit, instead of being as legitimate an auxiliary to

agriculture as it is to all other industries, remains a demoralising abuse. I know of no channel through which moral and material benefit is more likely to be brought to the farmers of Ireland than the organisation of credit under the highly educational system of Co-operative Agricultural Banks.

All these projects imply the formation of local societies, out of which a central organisation is to be evolved. Each of these projects is based upon considerations of material advantage. This business basis in the constituent societies will provide the element of authority in the central federation. But even if this federation be not formed in addition to immediate gain, voluntary association will bring about a marked improvement in the habits and methods of the farmer himself, the importance of which it is impossible to over-estimate. Combination appears to me to be the missing link between the theory and practice of agriculture. The local society will exercise an educational influence in many ways. As we have found in the case of the Co-operative Dairying Societies, the dissemination of information among farmers is greatly facilitated, once voluntary association has superseded exclusive and individualistic industry. The meeting together for a common business purpose not only stimulates the appetite for information, but, which is more important, it results

in the information, when obtained, being acted upon. The more enterprising members become the leaders, and they make and maintain their position by bringing some new information or profitable advice to their fellow-members from without.

I believe that the competition at local shows would be far keener and far less restricted if these institutions were more democratically controlled, which would clearly be the case if associations of farmers generally prevailed. Nor have I much hope for agricultural education until the stimulus of voluntary association for business purposes has prepared the way. Wasteful methods are persevered in, not from lack of information but from old farming habits, begotten perhaps by protection, and confirmed in Ireland by the land system of the past which discouraged farming enterprise.

Everywhere we find the farmers willing to listen to our proposals, and in no way less inclined to act upon our advice, when it is realised that we have nothing else to offer. The difficulty which in England would arise from a jealous regard for the sanctity of middle profits is perhaps less formidable in a country where agriculture is the dominant, almost the only, large national industry. In any case the scheme is well backed. It is with a full knowledge of the difficulties before them

that leading men of the most opposite opinions in all other matters have joined together in a great appeal to the "bone and sinew" of our native land.

CHAPTER III.

IMPROVED METHODS OF CULTIVATION.

RESULTS OF DEEP CULTIVATION.

By W. Sowerby, F.G.S.

THOROUGH cultivation means a system whereby the best crops are obtained year by year from the same land without exhausting the soil of its virgin fertility. The primary condition is to give the soil plenty of fresh air and a sufficient quantity of moisture, for, according to Liebig, Voelcker, and Ville, 93·55 of the natural nourishment of wheat is obtained from air and water, 3·45 is obtained from the soil, while 3 per cent. only has to be supplied in the shape of manures of various kinds.

In order to fully aërate the soil, it must be completely pulverised. To show the importance of this it is only necessary to point to the fact that a solid cubic foot of earth will only leave exposed to the air six square feet, or 864 square inches, whereas if

broken into lumps of one inch it would have 10,368 square inches of surface exposed. Again, if the depth of the cultivation were increased by deeper ploughing, or digging by hand labour, the quantity of soil that becomes opened up to the action of the air becomes enormous. This is the basis of thorough cultivation, the immense importance of which has been proved by its practical application to agriculture. Ordinary agriculturists, both in this and in many other countries, content themselves with ploughing up the ground, in a very superficial manner, to a depth of from 6 inches to 10 inches, and then applying stimulating artificial manure to increase their crops; this is generally accomplished, but to the impoverishment of the virgin fertility of the soil. Those who have partly tried deeper cultivation have been disappointed at the first results, simply because they bring up the subsoil to the surface, forgetting that before it becomes suitable for sustaining vegetation it requires to be exposed to the action of the air for one, two, or more seasons.

It is to Jethro Tull we owe the first extended and more complete system of improved deep cultivation or tillage. This was on his farm of 200 acres in Oxfordshire, where he carried on his system of cultivation for many years during the early part of last century, with the most satisfactory and profitable

results. His success was most unquestionable, so much so that even Young—the originator, or rather promoter, of alternate crops—acknowledged in the end the excellence of his system, while Cobbett was said to have pronounced his opinion most decidedly in favour of Tull's system.

Early in the present century the Marquis of Tweeddale commenced a system of deep cultivation upon his Yester Estates, with the most valuable results. On land which, before he took up the farm, would occasionally yield a poor crop of oats, he succeeded in obtaining 40 bushels of excellent wheat per acre, and similar results with regard to root crops.

The principle followed by Tull and the marquis was essentially the same, *viz.*, that of admitting freely the air, the sun-light, and its warmth, into the pores, and thus bringing the soil into the most favourable condition for nourishing vegetation. The marquis also drained his land, but Tull did not need to do this, as his subsoil was a dry, absorbent chalk.

More recently General Sir A. Cotton has followed up this system with the most remarkable and surprising results. Not content with simply ploughing and turning the surface and subsoil to a depth of 22 inches, he has penetrated to a depth of 36 inches. This, of course, at an additional expense for labour, but the results have far more than paid this extra ex-

pense, for the yield has been from 100 to 140 bushels of wheat per acre, and similar large crops of roots and potatoes, as well as hay. This has been done even in the driest and most unfavourable seasons.

In June, 1893, in spite of the drought, Sir A. Cotton cut a plot of English grasses in Surrey which was 5 feet high, producing more than 2 lbs. of hay per square yard or $4\frac{1}{2}$ tons per acre. There were two other cuttings, making altogether 7 tons, worth about £60 at the winter prices. In the same year he raised a quantity of Indian corn, which grew 8 feet high, producing in the average 120 bushels of fair sample.

In 1894, on poor land splendid results were obtained by applying deep cultivation to wheat. Instead of 4 or 5 feet growth it reached about 7 feet, the average of the plot being 55 ears per plant, weighing $3\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. each, the total weight per acre being about 100,000 pounds or 45 tons, and when dry 12 tons of straw.

Equally surprising results were obtained by thorough cultivation applied to swedes and potatoes.

Deep cultivation has also been applied with most satisfactory results at several farms in different counties, for example, at Hareshill in Norfolk, at Woolpit, etc. At a large Hampshire farm a wonderful crop of barley was obtained, while of potatoes 20 tons per acre were taken, the usual average being 8

tons. Experiments in Australia bear similar testimony, Mr. J. L. Thompson, J.P., of the Hawkesbury Agricultural College, adducing wonderful results.

The high cost of working the deep cultivation, as produced by Sir A. Cotton, is likely to be considerably reduced, since several leading implement makers are making suitable implements. Thorough cultivation requiring great labour, care and skill, is especially applicable upon small holdings and allotments.

CULTIVATION OF HEAVY LAND.

(Being Extracts from a Paper read upon Thorough Cultivation at the Hadleigh Colony.)

By George Hawthorne.

It is now some eighteen months since I paid my first visit to the farm colony at Hadleigh.

Knowing something of the nature of the Essex clays, and the way in which they were farmed, I was not surprised to find the usual routine of the county being carried out.

The 6 feet lands or stetches, with a wide furrow between each, constituting one-tenth of the land, were to be seen in almost every field. These furrows are never intended to be planted with corn, but to give every facility for the growth of weeds. Some of these weeds will ripen and fall on the land; the

remainder will be harvested with the corn, and be brought on to the land again the following year with the manure.

Hoeing is a superfluity rarely or never indulged in. Wheat-planting on the colony was almost given up, and the oat crop substituted, giving a smaller return than the wheat.

I recommended a return to wheat, as the land was more adapted for its growth.

It took a great deal of persuasion on my part to induce them to allow me to plant a field of wheat in my own way, but at last I succeeded in doing so.

The result of that crop this harvest has been 60 bushels of wheat and 3 tons of straw; the straw was nearly 6 feet high; and if the wheat and straw were sent to market it would give a return of £15 per acre.

This year I have 40 acres of wheat growing, 25 of which were up and going along well when I left on the 10th of this month.

This I think you will find rather a novelty, not only in Essex, but in any county in England; and, if every farmer in Essex was in this hall to-night, I don't think you would find one in the whole number but who would say I had done a very foolish thing.

Well, I won't attempt to argue with a farmer; but

if anyone will meet me at the farm colony on the 1st of August next he shall enjoy his own opinion.

They would also be astonished to find I have planted only 1 bushel to the acre; and next year, if the land is in proper condition, 2 pecks will be the right quantity of seed.

Not being an expert in figures, I will now give one or two items to those who are, and no doubt the result will surprise you. Given the number of acres of wheat planted in England in any single year, take into account that the minimum quantity of seed per acre is 2 bushels, and you will then get the number of bushels that has been thrown away and wasted, to say nothing of the injury done to every crop by the extra bushel planted.

You will be able to produce the same results by early planting, and by paying great attention to autumn cultivation, the weather being generally more favourable and less risky than in spring; and I have no hesitation in saying the neglect of this has been the ruin of many farmers.

This may be seen more plainly this year than in any year I ever remember.

What is the process that has been going on?

- Why, thresh, thresh, thresh, all over the country; not that the wheat has been in a condition to thresh, but it has been in a condition not to keep, and you must

let the miller have it at any price. Whereas, if it had remained in the stack till after Christmas, it would have been in good condition, and a better price would have been realised.

The time spent in threshing and marketing has been lost for autumn cultivation and planting, and thus you get a miserable prospect for another year. The land is badly planted, and a great deal of it will be left over till spring, and that may be a wet one.

The agricultural credit banks would here step in and prevent all this mischief.

The clay lands of Essex are very productive, but very unworkable, and this is the secret why so many have failed in their cultivation, and so much land has gone derelict.

You must not expect all the constituents of good land to be found in any one county, but nature in this case has placed the remedy near at hand.

London is not blessed by having coal mines in its vicinity, but coal is brought from Newcastle. Mining is a very expensive operation, but it pays us to get coal.

On the opposite shore of the Thames in Kent, you have large deposits of chalk; and if this were mixed with the Essex clay it would entirely change its nature, and convert it into a rich loamy soil, capable of growing any kind of crop. £5 per acre spent

in this way would give a return of 50 per cent. on the outlay every succeeding year.

Farm-yard manure on clay land is very little good until you get it into good cultivation, and bring it into contact with the soil and the atmosphere. You might as well put it between two pieces of leather.

The manager of a farm ought to be a man who knows what he knows, and knows what he does not know, a man who has a theory, but who never adopts a theory until he has tested it by practice in the field.

There are two kinds of theories, the one broad and receptive, the other narrow and restricted. The former opens the door to all possibilities in agriculture, the latter shuts that door, and says there is nothing more to be learnt.

And this brings us face to face with the question, Can farm colonies be made self-supporting?

This depends entirely upon what you grow per acre, supplemented by the number of animals you can keep on the farm to provide for the support of the colony, and to keep up the fertility of the soil.

In a year or two the Hadleigh colony will become an interesting object lesson to the nation, inasmuch as it will supply the data to determine whether the aggregate production on a given area will prove the

possibility of rendering ourselves independent of the foreigner for our food supply.

Unless my hopes are frustrated by a bundle of red tape, it will be proved beyond a shadow of doubt that in the matter of wheat, which is the backbone of the farmer, and the most important item to the nation, this is within the bounds of possibility.

But this very desirable end will have to be preceded by the sweeping away of all unjust laws that hinder its accomplishment. •

It is to be hoped that all other farm colonies will emulate each other in pressing on to the same goal.

In the time allotted to me, I have only been able to touch lightly upon those points most likely to interest you. You will, I hope, be able to determine in your own minds if each or any of them are worthy of your serious consideration. If they are, you will be able to give effect to them in the future conduct of your several farm colonies.

I will only add a few words as to the prospects of the farm colony at Hadleigh. This time last year I could have counted the number of ricks at harvest on one of my hands. I should want many hands this year to count them.

We must remember that it is always easier to throw stones than to find the sinews of war.

They are doing a great work. Let those who can

give them a helping hand. They have a splendid estate; the situation is everything that can be desired; and it reflects great credit on those who recommended General Booth to purchase it.

- Gentlemen, you have a great work before you. If you can find work for the agricultural labourer, if you can find work for those who can be taught to till the land, if you can raise their social standing, and keep them from the snares and temptations of town life, you will confer a lasting benefit on the country.

CHAPTER IV.

UNEMPLOYED UPON THE LAND. EXPERIMENTS AND PROPOSALS.

A TRAINING FARM FOR THE UNEMPLOYED.

By Walter Hazell, M.P.

THE training farm at Langley, Essex, was begun in 1891 with a view of dealing with men who, from various causes, were quite unable to obtain work under present conditions of competitive employment. The cases dealt with are not merely the unemployed among the ordinary workers, but men who, from want of skill, reputation, training, or through other disadvantages, have nothing to offer which any employer would care to accept. If young men are strong and willing to work on the land, and have no defect in their antecedents, they can often be sent to Canadian farms without any preliminary training, by the Self-Help Emigration Society, a society which has placed out in Canada about 5,000 persons, because in most

cases the opening for workers on the land is so considerable that being a skilled farm labourer is not an essential condition. It is not, however, fair to send to the colonies people who have all the drawbacks alluded to above, and whose record is not fairly satisfactory. To meet such difficult cases, I rented, early in 1891, with the assistance of one or two friends, a small farm-house, and at first only four acres, which were next year increased to 28, at Langley, Essex. A farm bailiff and his wife were engaged as superintendents, and selected cases were sent down by way of experiment. The scheme has been tried for nearly four years, and has been so far successful that this remote and inconvenient little farm has been given up in favour of one of 225 acres near Chesham, Bucks. As the cost and results of this first effort are now complete, it is a suitable time for making the result public. One hundred and nine cases were accepted, nine were transferred to the new farm in September, 1894, and so exactly a hundred cases have now to be reported upon. A few are boys of from 14 to 17, and five aged from 40 to 46, but the average age is 24. They represent every degree of unfitness for life if left without some special help and training. They were merely existing in London, and 44 came direct from lodging-houses and refuges. Scarcely one had a trade, or had belonged to a trades union. Their

occupations were so nondescript as to defy classification. Off and on, uncertain, unskilled, irregular work was accompanied by unsettled, irregular, unsatisfactory lives. An exception must be made as to four who had no defect of character, and were simply young fellows who wanted a little farm training before going to Canada, and ten others whose defects were want of health rather than of character. The remainder attributed their low condition to having had bad or no training, to drink, to petty pilfering as youths in 12 cases, and in the remainder to general want of employment, a want which no good times were ever likely to supply. When accepted, they were, if strong enough, recommended as a first test to walk to the farm, 45 miles distant. Seven who accepted this invitation never turned up, and so disappeared from the scene. The remainder reached the farm, where they were provided with plenty of plain, wholesome food, and decent lodging in the farm-house, living in the style of a small farming family, the barrack system being entirely absent. It is hardly possible to estimate too highly the high moral influence of the manager and his wife, and the way in which, living with the men, they have touched their hearts and uplifted their lives. Being quite without means, and generally with no change of clothes, everything has to be done for them, and they are pro-

vided with necessaries without considering whether their labour is worth little or nothing. There are no rigid rules except that they may not enter a public-house. They are taught such farm work as is possible, and especially are they taught to milk, as this is a sure passport to work in Canada. Bad behaviour has been very small indeed; in general they have worked and behaved fairly, some being, of course, more intelligent and industrious than others; but many of them, finding themselves in a comfortable home, have been too willing to stay there indefinitely. When they have gained strength by good food and regular habits, and have obtained a little skill in farm work, the question arises, What shall be done with them? The average stay on the farm has been 72 days. At different times 19 left, or were dismissed owing to being more or less unsatisfactory. Eleven went away to work in England, and if openings could have been found for them, I should have preferred for the remainder to have gone to English farms, but hitherto no openings have occurred. Therefore, the most available outlet was to accept the co-operation of the Self-Help Emigration Society, which have an admirable system of sending people to Canadian farms, which practically insures them work on arrival. Sixty of these men were sent there, while three went to New Zealand. Up to this point the work

was comparatively easy, if the money for the effort were forthcoming. The question is, What becomes of them after they go to Canada? Records have been kept as carefully as possible of the results. In nearly every case, the Self-Help Emigration Society's correspondent has reported the name of the farm to which the emigrant had been sent, and the wages which he would receive, and before sailing, the men have been urged to write to those who had befriended them in England. Fifteen have not written, so nothing is known of them, except that with scarcely an exception they obtained work at once on farms. Of the remainder, two are still on their voyage to New Zealand, thirty-five have written, or their friends have written about them to the effect that they were in employment, five are in more or less irregular work, and six are considered more or less unsatisfactory, though only two are decidedly so. While the social and moral results might be considered very encouraging, the farming results are not so, for various reasons. In the first year, the four acres were entered upon too late to produce any crop worth mentioning, and the year 1893 was one of widespread farming disaster. The object of the farm is not farm profit, but training for the men. The farm is too small for the number of men employed, and their work is of little moment, because as soon as they

acquire any skill they are emigrated. The cost of the experiment has been a total outlay of £950. The sale of the produce has produced £411, leaving a loss of £539. This works out at a loss of one and sixpence per day for each man while resident at the farm. This includes his food, some clothing, railway fares, the maintenance of the manager and his wife, and a great number of incidental expenses. I do not claim to have made a great discovery, but I believe that the experiment may be considered on the whole encouraging. It is most desirable that others should try like experiments on a small scale where personal influence can be brought to bear, where each case can be dealt with thoroughly upon its merits. More faith is to be placed in such methods than in great schemes involving heavy expenditure which mass together a number of men, who need above all things personal and friendly contact with people whose conduct is on a higher plane. I am disposed to believe that my new farm in Buckinghamshire will show that men can be still better trained with a reduced loss; but in any case, I consider that money thus spent has not been spent in vain. I find that the Guardians, the Charity Organisation Society, and similar organisations, are glad to send selected men to the farm, and pay 5s. a week, which has been about half the cost of their maintenance, whilst I at first,

with the assistance of a few friends, have been pleased to make up the deficiency. In conclusion, I suggest that similar farms should be tried in the neighbourhood of all great centres of population.

THE COLONY AT STARNTHWARTE.

By the Rev. H. V. Mills.

This colony has been based on the idea that the problem of unemployed labour is too great for private enterprise to deal with ; it is already a national question ; to me it seems the most pressing of all political, religious, or social evils. It has become the root of crime, and unbelief, and prostitution. The causes of unemployed labour, as we knew it in modern society, are not of a temporary character. Labour-saving inventions have been introduced, and they never will be withdrawn. The price of grain and general produce will not be materially raised for many generations, because the same causes have produced both the low prices and the lack of demand for labour. If the State undertakes the task of finding work for the unemployed poor, I think it will of necessity be undertaken through the agency of the Poor Law, and under the direction of the Local Government Board ; because here Parliament has already recognised a

national obligation to house, and feed, and clothe those who are destitute. In a foolish, ineffectual manner the State has gone so far as to give work to a few of them. But stone-breaking and oakum-picking are devilish devices, calculated because of their waste to degrade men. We must recognise the fact that useless task-work does not even pretend to be a remedy for our evils. The motive for it is to keep down the rates ; it is not an attempt to cope with a serious problem. •

There are in England and Wales 649 Poor Law unions. In every union there are many acres of good agricultural land greatly reduced in value ; there are able-bodied men and women in want of work and in deep distress ; there are also estates in every union set apart as a kind of heritage of the poor, consisting of huge workhouses and board-rooms, which might be sold if a radical reform were carried through Parliament, and the land, the labourers and the capital thus obtained might be at once used to equip in every union a home colony, which would find useful work of a self-supporting character in 649 different centres. Then England would have seriously grappled with its problem of unemployed labour, her waste lands would begin to be fertile again, and the general standard of life amongst the working people would be improved.

It should be understood that the Westmoreland Home Colonisation experiment is not an attempt to deal with the question, but is a pioneer settlement based upon sound principles, which may be of use to England when Parliament turns its attention seriously to the problem.

Five and a half miles from Kendal, and three miles from the shores of Windermere Lake, we have purchased 130 acres of land by public subscription. The work has been in operation about two years and a half. We began with three or four colonists, increasing our numbers as we found the land more productive, and as new industries could be organised, until to-day we have thirty colonists. We could do with more colonists if we had more capital ; indeed, we could at once double this number if we could obtain another £1,500, which would purchase and prepare another 100 acres of adjoining land, and the work would be more easily and more economically carried on—if on a larger scale.

The distinguishing features of this colony are that it is not only a farm, but a co-operative village, where manufactures are carried on under the same management as agriculture. The work done is very little of a commercial character ; it is done chiefly for the use of the colonists themselves. Nothing is sold off the estate except what is necessary to provide the

colonists with pocket-money, and to purchase such things as they cannot themselves produce, such as tea, coffee, sugar, and petroleum. The articles produced in order to purchase these things are bacon, eggs, butter, peat moss, litter, and generally such articles as are already brought into the open markets of England from foreign countries. But we have produced all the more important articles of food, such as potatoes, cabbage, beef, mutton, pork, apples, damsons, milk, butter, and we have woven our own cloth and made our own clothing, and built a new house, and produced our own peat fuel. All the colonists are men and women who have known the anxieties and sufferings of prolonged lack of employment. Another distinguishing feature of the experiment is that it is a colony for women and children as well as men. It is not a monastic settlement from which women's work and influence is excluded. It seems to me that if a distinction ought to be made between the sexes, the first colonies ought not to be for men only, but rather for women, because they suffer most for lack of work and low wages. But surely the right thing is to organise a village which shall be self-contained and self-supporting as far as possible, where the natural relations of wives and husbands, parents and children, are respected and provided for. Only so can the reform be permanent and beneficial.

The land was purchased and is now vested in five carefully selected trustees, who hold it for the purposes of social reform in such a manner that it can never again become private property. In the event of a large profit being made, the trustees are bound to use the capital thus created for the improvement of the condition of the workers, or for the purchase of additional land, and the maintenance of a larger number of colonists. At the present moment the colony is out of debt, and has a small surplus at the bank, but there are several industries waiting to be organised which will require additional capital before this can be accomplished. We have been fortunate in securing an estate at a very low price where we have a powerful water-wheel. This is now constantly occupied, grinding all kinds of grain, and also driving a large circular saw and other machines used by carpenters. There is also a blacksmith's shop, which I hope in a short time will be at work. There is also a guest-house, where visitors are received at a low charge who wish to spend a holiday at the colony, or to see the working of the experiment in its daily detail. Every colonist agrees to abide by a set of rules—to give an average of 8 hours' work per day, and to receive in return board, lodging, recreation, clothing, and a sum of pocket-money not exceeding half-a-crown per head per week.

There are 16 horses on the farm, 10 of which have been bred on the estate since the commencement of the experiment. The number of pigs bred already amounts to several hundreds. We not only manufacture meal from grain for our own farm, but also for a large number of neighbouring farmers, who have now a very friendly feeling toward the experiment, although at first they treated it with a certain amount of aversion. There are nearly 40 acres of land under cultivation, producing not only corn but market garden crops, for which there is a good demand both in Kendal and Windermere. At the present the colony is nearly self-supporting and self-contained.

THE UNEMPLOYED EXPERIMENT AT ABBEY MILLS.¹

Early in 1894 it was agreed by the Executive Committee of the Mansion House Conference upon the Unemployed to repeat the experiment of 1893, placing selected bodies of unemployed men to work

¹ This statement is an abbreviation of the paper read at the Conference by Mr. Bolton King, Secretary of the Mansion House Committee upon the Unemployed, and adopted and published as the report of that Committee.

upon land under careful directions, with certain modifications of last year's scheme.

The area from which the "unemployed" were chosen comprised the whole of Tower Hamlets, and all workmen (except those engaged in season trades) with the qualification of twelve months' residence were eligible. Last year's cases were, however, not admitted unless special cause was shown.

The number of applicants was 414, of whom 273 were disqualified, or adjudged unsuitable for various reasons. Of the 141 dealt with, no fewer than 94 were Londoners by birth, and 17 others urban. Thus the committee found still stronger confirmation than in 1893 that the kind of poverty dealt with is largely a town product.

The age of applicants ran as follows :—

Under 25, ...	27
25 and under 35, ...	59
35 45, ...	38
45 55, ...	17
	141

31 stated they were, or had been, members of a club or benefit society.

The men were placed to work at Abbey Mills under the superintendence of ganger and foreman.

No pressure was put upon them other than would obtain under the normal conditions of labour. Each man was quietly and intelligently observed, and a careful record was kept for the guidance of the committee as to his ability, conduct, and physique. The work of 1893 consisted in digging and levelling; but last winter the men accomplished work of a more skilled character. The official report of L.C.C. Valuers to the Small Holdings Committee of the council bore testimony to the satisfactory character of the work, which consisted in the construction of a large new dyke with substantial flood banks, the removal of a portion of a clay bank, and the making of trenches for the reception of sewer refuse on the raised clay land.

The length of time worked by each applicant varied according to circumstances when they came before the committee for settlement. If it was found impossible to reinstate the man in any way, he was at once firmly but kindly told we could do nothing further.

If, on the other hand, either by emigration, migration, or written promise of work in the near future, there was any hope of reinstatement, the man was returned to work pending settlement. The period of work varied, therefore, from a fortnight to upwards of two months. It was extremely gratifying to note

the great improvement in the appearance and physique of the men who remained for the longer periods upon the work.

It will, perhaps, be interesting to record a few of the difficulties the committee found in the average applicant.

1. He is an unskilled workman, who has rarely had any permanent situation.

2. He is strongly attached to his own locality, and is firmly convinced the committee can find him a job right here.

3. He is generally convinced it is the function of the committee to remodel the whole industrial system with immediate benefit to himself.

Having surmounted what may be termed the educational difficulties, the committee were confronted with various domestic hindrances, such as a sickly wife or child, abnormally large family, etc.

There were also the grave dangers of loose philanthropy to avoid, and the usual industrial difficulties well known to all who study the conditions of labour.

While it is ever easy to give the most demoralised man a dole and pass him out of sight, it is often difficult, if not impossible, firmly to reinstate an honest man who has been worsted in the battle of life.

The work of the committee seems to demonstrate certain facts and principles. •

1. It appears from the small number of men dismissed for idleness or bad conduct (14), a very large proportion of the applicants were *willing to work* if they could obtain it.

2. It is quite clear an efficient test of industry can be applied without recourse to even the *modified* workhouse test.

3. The character and quality of the work done by the unemployed at Abbey Mills is a standing proof that with better opportunities many of these families can be saved from the grip of poverty and pauperism.

4. The work of the committee has been carried on with a minimum of irritation to the hungry applicant, and a minimum of risk, by fraud and deception, to those who have made the committee their almoner.

The applicants, instead of being put back to starve during the time necessary for proper inquiry, were at once set to work. If, after inquiry and test work, the applicant was found to be unworthy or could not be reinstated for other reasons, he had only benefited by getting a few days' hardly earned wage.

So that even where the committee failed in its main purpose, *i.e.*, reinstatement, it accomplished a most efficient work of relief, safeguarded on every side from the dangers of loose philanthropy.

In reference to the cost of the scheme, it must be

borne in mind the committee were dealing in every instance with *families*, the applicant counting but one in our case return, and representing on an average five persons.

Judged fairly, the committee feel sure their work will be appreciated as a practical scheme for dealing with distress under very difficult circumstances.

THE SALVATION ARMY FARM COLONY AT HADLEIGH.

In order to make complete this record of attempts to employ unexperienced men upon the land, a reference should be made to the largest attempt of this character now in operation in England, *viz.*, the Hadleigh farm colony, founded by General Booth as part of the Darkest England scheme. Colonel Stitt, the governor of the farm colony, was asked to read a paper upon this subject, but owing to pressure incidental to the preparation of the balance-sheet, was unable to prepare the same. Rather than to allow so important a work to pass without notice, the undermentioned short note has been prepared, based upon an article in "All the World," a publication of the Salvation Army, but brought up to date by references to the report just issued.

"The estate obtained for the purposes of the colony

is situated within a square of a mile and a half, the centre being about 36 miles distant from London, 5 miles from the town of Southend, and 3 miles from the two nearest stations, which are Rayleigh on the G.E.R., and Leigh on the L.T. and S.R. It consists of the Park, Castle, Sayers, and Leigh Marsh Farms in the parish of Hadleigh, having an area of 1,052 acres, with the whole of the glebe and other land in the same parish, of about 100 acres, which is rented. At the time possession was taken 370 acres were arable, 630 grass, and 150 acres saltings.

“The only good arable land comprised about 80 acres on a high table-land adjoining the London road, which borders the colony on the north, and was in first-class cultivation. With regard to saltings, which are periodically covered by the high tides, it is proposed to embank these sufficiently high to prevent the influx of water, and then by careful subsequent treatment it is thought that in the course of a few years they may have a freehold value of £30 per acre.

“In addition to the ruins of Hadleigh Castle, the unruined buildings on the land, when possession was taken, consisted of Park Farm-house, a good-sized and well-built brick house ; the Castle Farm-house, which was rather old-fashioned and incommodious ; and out-buildings, sheds, etc., belonging to each. Since the

houses alone are valued at £2,000, and the first-class arable land before-named, belonging to Park Farm, had once been estimated at £60 per acre, the price of the entire estate, which was £19,000, cannot be considered excessive. Since the original purchase, a small farm of 60 acres adjoining the Leigh station, and extending to within 600 yards of Park Farm, has been secured, with the object of obtaining better access to the station."

The special advantages of the farms at Hadleigh for the attainment of the complex objects in view have been generally agreed upon by all critics, and were specially noticed in the report of the committee of inquiry, issued in September 1892. When entering into possession of the property, it was pointed out that in comparison with an ordinary farm the colony would have special advantages. There would be no rent or interest on capital to be provided; sufficient capital would be available for working purposes; extra labour was obtainable whenever wanted at harvest and hay-time at a cheap rate; a market at full prices for many products might be secured in connection with the various branches of work carried on by the Salvation Army; extra returns for garden produce would be realised without the usual risks of a market gardener, by reason of the consumers being upon the property; and better prices in some

cases would be obtained by the sale of manufactured articles in the place of raw products.

The farms were taken possession of on behalf of the Salvation Army on May 2nd, 1891, and by August in the same year over 200 men, taken from the submerged classes of London, were in residence, all working as labourers. Since that date the number seems to have varied considerably: in June, 1892, there having been 325; in June, 1893, the number had decreased to 241; while since then they seem to have increased, and have averaged about 300.

Large sums have been spent upon the colony, these amounts having mainly been capital. Four reports have been issued, with balance-sheets showing the assets obtained for this expenditure. These were dated respectively, November 30th, 1891, and September 30th, 1892, 1893 and 1894. These balance-sheets show the assets at these dates to have been £36,277 14s. 3d.; £69,340 9s. 11d.; £89,973 8s.; and £94,473 4s. 7d. respectively. In addition to expenditure for which these assets have been obtained, the expense of maintenance for periods covered by the balance-sheets have been: for the first period of seven months, £1,050; for the second period of ten months, £4,800; for the third period of twelve months, £3,600; and for the twelve months ending September 30th, 1894, £2,450.

These four reports may be considered to indicate that, at the commencement of the colony, the results of the labour of the men on the land seemed effective and useful. In the two years following the report of November 30th, 1891, a sum of over £50,000 seems to have been spent in attempting to found industries on a large scale, which have been entirely unsuccessful. During the last year, ending September 30th, 1894, more attention has been given to the agricultural work, with far less expenditure of capital; with the result that had it not been for a loss of £1,700 on the industries, the colony would have been nearly self-supporting. In spite of the year having been so disastrous to ordinary farmers, the special advantages of the colony as before-named have been such, that after paying for all wages and maintenance of men, a profit of nearly £600 has been made by the farm department towards general administration costs.

From this last report it appears that the total number of men that have been on the colony from the commencement to the date of the report exceeds 1,600.

CHURCH ARMY FARM COLONY.

Rev. W. H. Hunt, secretary of the social work of the Church Army, read a paper describing the Church Army farm colony in Suffolk. As it appeared that possession had only recently

been obtained, no results could be reported while plans for the future were not settled. It need therefore receive no lengthy notice in these pages. It appeared, however, that Bishop Wilkinson offered to the Army a farm of nearly 350 acres, situate at Thelnetham in Suffolk, about 9 miles from the nearest town and station of Thetford, with the condition that it should be used for the training of those not exceeding 20 years of age. The gift was accepted with this condition, and possession had been obtained of the farm in the previous August. Another farm adjoining of nearly 200 acres became vacant from Michaelmas, and after much consideration it was determined to rent this farm in order to receive men upon it from the town labour homes. Possession had not yet been obtained, but would be secured very shortly. Plans had not yet been completed in detail for the use of the property, and would depend largely upon the funds from contributions, for which Mr. Hunt made an urgent appeal.

LABOUR FOR THE UNEMPLOYED UPON THE LAND.

By the Rev. J. B. Paton, D.D.

The policy pursued in regard to the unemployed since the passing of the Poor Law Act, in 1834, should certainly be reversed. "Since the passing of that Act," as the Right Honourable H. H. Fowler said last year in the House of Commons, "the principle on which boards of guardians had been governed in the giving of out-door relief to able-bodied men was, that such relief should be given as the necessities of the

case required, work being provided merely as a test of destitution." Work thus given to the unemployed, being intended only as a searching and drastic test to prevent as far as possible anyone who was fit for labour from sinking into pauperism, and becoming dependent upon the community, was necessarily of a repellent and punitive character. It was often wholly unproductive, so that good labour was wasted, and was generally most irksome and tedious. Whoever, therefore, accepted it, was not only branded with the pauper name, but was immediately oppressed with the dulness and degradation that are inseparable from pauper labour. This was right and necessary if the only object of such work was to raise a barrier, warding off the respectable poor by terror and shame from the swamp of pauperism, and leading them to adopt every means and exhaust every contrivance before they surrender their independence and become a burden upon the community.

But in our time a new spirit has arisen, and the economic conditions of life have so changed that it is impossible any longer to regard want of employment in itself as a culpable thing. The great and rapid fluctuations in modern trade, and the sudden vicissitudes that befall great industries, have, in recent years, combined with the severe and long-continued agricultural depression that is sweeping the people away

from the country districts; to bring loss of employment upon multitudes of the most deserving of our industrial class.

Now, to thrust these, because they are unemployed, into the pauper class, is a great wrong to them, and inflicts manifold evils upon the community. Even, too, for those of the unemployed who are already tainted with the pauper and dependent spirit, or who are idle because of dissipation, or of physical weakness that makes them unfit for the severe toil which most industries exact, or of the hereditary instinct of indolence and loafing which they have inherited from pauper ancestors, it is felt that society must seek to redeem them and to redeem itself from the chronic evil which, like a moral leprosy, afflicts them and afflicts society through them. Some of them may be hopelessly irreclaimable; but others, through wise and kindly discipline, and under healthful conditions, might be restored to themselves, and become fit for a life of industry and honest independence. Hence the new problem of the unemployed, *viz.*, to provide work for those who seek it, and are capable of it; and also to give employment to those who do not eagerly seek it, but who need it, and who may by suitable work be trained to habits of sobriety, industry, and independence.

In the solution of this problem there are two factors

of supreme importance. First, the kind of work in which they may engage; and, secondly, the conditions under which they engage in it.

In reference to the first, there are considerations which make it plain that the labour for our unemployed must be chiefly upon the land.

The first desideratum is that a man may, by his labour on the land, raise products which he himself consumes. The whole of the labour that is spent in tilling the land may yield products which are consumed by the labourer himself, or which supply a demand for which at present there is no supply in our own country. And thus any number of labourers can be both employed and maintained on the land without competing with other labourers and throwing them out of employment.

Secondly, there is room in the cultivation of land for all kinds of labour; that which is unskilled, and that which is skilled. Any man who can handle a hoe, a fork, a spade, or a rake, can find labour on the land.

Again, work on the land has other qualities which would be instrumental in raising the general standard of life. It is interesting, full of variety, and health-giving; it contains high possibilities of social life. Socially, it possesses two great advantages. It permits the cultivation of society in the evening and in

other leisure hours to those who engage in it, while it does not allow the massing together of large numbers in a barrack-life. Little capital would be required for such labour as the unemployed can undertake—hand labour engaged in raising crops for their own consumption, or such as can furnish a staple of some in-door industry. Days when work on the land is impossible and the long winter evenings can be utilised for simple handwork which will afford pleasant change and supplement the earnings from the land, such industry to supply the home market with commodities now drawn from other countries. Lastly, by such work many of the unemployed may be trained for permanent settlement on the land.

Certain circumstances in England to-day afford special encouragement and facilities to these methods of engaging the unemployed, *e.g.*, the cheapness of land, much of which is even passing out of cultivation. Certain changes of opinion in modern farming indicate the method of agriculture which will be found most serviceable, namely, the system of intensive and hand industry. According to leading experts, five acres of ordinary land will maintain a man, who can till this quantity by hand labour, with some slight assistance from horse or steam ploughing. Some even recommend a more intensive cultivation by hand labour. Arable dairying is strongly recom-

mended as more profitable than the usual grass farming. If largely practised it would not only restore and keep upon the land large numbers of agricultural labourers, but would suitably occupy the unemployed with spade labour. This, therefore, should be made the central industry round which the minor rural industries should gather.

As to the conditions under which the unemployed can thus engage in agricultural life, two are most essential. They must neither wear the pauper badge nor be subjected to the usual conditions of pauper life. Everything must be done to awaken in them a sense of independence. The social atmosphere in which they work must be bracing and educative. There must be firm and kindly discipline ; watchful and careful administration in every department of the work ; and a wise and even scientific direction of all labour. After full provision for wholesome physical conditions is secured, all efforts should be directed to lifting the degraded character of the men by the maintenance of a wholesome moral environment.

Such, in brief, is the work which the Christian Union for Social Service set before them. Important though the work is, the notion that it demands vast resources and a costly administrative system has been completely dispelled by recent

experience. Pastor von Bodelschwingh had shown ten years ago how, at a comparatively small expense, the unemployed could be occupied and trained on the land, and how their labour could be not only made productive, yielding a large part of what was needed for their sustenance, but also how it could be made most effective as a discipline of life.

The astonishing results achieved on the colony which he planted ten years ago at Wilhelmsdorf, so startled and impressed the public mind in Germany, that twenty-six colonies have since been planted on the same lines in all parts of Germany, with the result that over 60,000 vagrants and men, described as unemployed, have passed through them during these years. The impression produced by the book, entitled "A Colony of Mercy," which was written by Miss Sutter, and by two articles written by Earl Meath in *The Nineteenth Century*, describing the same work, has stirred Christian men and women in every part of this country, and led them to see the menacing gravity of the evil existing everywhere around them in the number of unemployed men, and also to see clearly the methods by which this evil could be here, as in Germany, immediately lessened, if not wholly removed.

• The Christian Union for Social Service has been formed to adapt the methods of Pastor von Bodelsch-

wingh to the conditions of English life. The Union is Catholic and undenominational, as it is hoped that all Christian people will rejoice to unite in an object which commends itself to every Christian man. It is proposed, in the first instance, to take a large farm of uncultivated land and form on it a training labour colony, in the hope of making it like Pastor Bodelschwingh's at Wilhelmsdorf, a model which may be followed in other parts of the country. Last year the Local Government Board gave permission to certain boards of guardians to send unemployed men, who were fit for work, to such a colony, and several boards of guardians have intimated their willingness to do so, and to provide five shillings per week for the support of each man whom they send. With this help from boards of guardians it is believed that men on a farm training colony can be supported with little further expense. The labour of the men on the farm and indoors will suffice, together with the guardians' allowance, not only for their maintenance, but also for some remuneration, which will be given them under specific conditions as an incentive to industry, or reserved for them when they leave, as a fund to help them in starting a new career.

On each farm it is proposed that, adopting the German names, there shall be a house father and

a house mother, and Christian brothers, who will be the companions and leaders of all the workers in the colony; in addition, it is proposed that there shall be a small body of associate helpers, men of education and experience in social work, whose occasional presence will give a higher tone to the social life of the colony. The associate helpers will also give directions to the various industries of the colony, and will specially undertake to give personal sympathy and counsel to every worker in the colony, with a view to his future prospects in life. They will be friendly advisers of the workers, seeking to help them towards a position of honourable self-support and independence after they have left the colony.

Whilst the colony will in all probability, under the conditions named, be wholly or nearly self-supporting, a certain capital sum must be invested at the outset in altering or erecting convenient but economical buildings, and in furnishing them; in providing implements, and seeds, and the small amount of stock that will be required; and also for the maintenance of the men until the first crops are raised. In these objects £2,000 will probably be required, and towards this sum nearly £1,000 have been privately contributed. An appeal has been issued for the remaining £1,000, but in view of certain offers of temporary capital, the work need not wait until that amount is forthcoming.

The first colony upon the model of Pastor Bodelschwingh's will, I hope, be established without delay, so that unemployed men may be received in it in the spring of 1895. I see no reason why, following closely the great example of our German leaders, like results may not be achieved in this country to those which we have seen in Germany. If so, within a very few years twenty or thirty such colonies will be planted throughout England and Scotland. These colonies, conducted, I hope, in every instance by Christian men and women, so that each colony may be inspired by the high morality and the redeeming ardour of our Christian faith, will certainly relieve the pressure felt at times in all districts by our guardians from the number of the unemployed poor. If then they are associated, as in Germany, with relief stations wisely located, they should sweep our country free, as they have done in Germany, from able-bodied vagrants.

Earl Meath and Mr. Passmore Edwards have followed the example of Pastor Bodelschwingh in establishing colonies for our epileptic poor. The Christian Union for Social Service believes that precisely the same treatment should be applied to inebriates, and to the feeble-minded who are not epileptic, and they hope in the development of their work to found colonies for these two classes of the community, classes which now appeal most pitifully

for help. The extent both to which the Union can assist the ordinary unemployed, and the time when it will take up the fresh branches will depend upon the financial support secured. An appeal was only issued quite recently, and what the results will be cannot yet be stated. With regard to these classes, it may be said in a final word, that such colonies, even with their out-door labour under proper regulations, are equally as much needed by, and will be as helpful to, women as to men.¹

A SETTLEMENT FOR ARMY RESERVE MEN.

By Major Synge.

The employment of army reserve men on agricultural settlements, if it could be obtained, would bring special advantages. In the first place, it would provide for the maintenance of their physical efficiency, and would render their services available whenever they might be needed, avoiding the untold confusion which would arise if any large number were

¹ A fuller statement of Dr. Paton's plan of work will be found in his pamphlet, "Labour for the Unemployed," published by The Christian Union for Social Service, 186 Aldersgate Street, E.C.

called away from avocations in which their continuous services were indispensable.

Again, the opportunity afforded for agriculture throughout the wide Empire of England enables every variety of agriculture to be practised, and a practically unlimited field is open to the reserve forces, which would involve no emulative competition for their maintenance, while they would be materially assisting to rid their country from its present dangerous dependence for food upon foreigners who might in some unfortunate contingencies prove her enemies.

As for the practical application of these principles, I would begin from the beginning of a soldier's career, which is the most valuable and determining moment of his life. He finds himself in an entirely new life, every incident of which is ordered for him, sitting, standing, walking, running, eating, sleeping, dressing, etc. Even his idleness is measured out to him, and his spare cash. Strange as it might sound, it seems true that soldiers, especially young soldiers, have too much money, and too much time on their hands. Pay-day means a periodical indulgence in idle revelling, or, at any rate, in occupations which render a return to the stern, hard, self-maintaining labour exacted by the necessities of civil life more and more irksome, and next to impossible.

Surely it would be an enormous gain if entrance

upon the soldier's duty was attended by a certainty that the discharge of that duty would leave him better qualified and more secure of constant employment when the period of service was over.

The unfortunate position under which they now suffered had been well and concisely summed up in an official report (J. G. of R.), which stated that they returned to civil life in early manhood trained, but outside the groove of any trade in civil calling. However, they returned in possession of a sum of money equivalent to £3 for every year's service, besides whatever they had put by during their term of service. This money, now squandered, might be put to the best advantage, and the labour set free at the end of service might be utilised in the following manner. A syndicate supplied with funds, in the first instance, by outside capitalists might undertake the formation of one or more agricultural settlements, which should include in their operations the reclamation of land, the making of roads, cultivation, bridging, and possibly a port. In this way a considerable variety of employment could be provided. The capital originally furnished should be redeemed by the subscription and the labour of the settlers. The labour should be primarily that of the proprietors *in posse*, so carrying out to the fullest extent the principles of co-operation. As the object is to find

and make employment for labour which could find no other market, the immediate payments should be made on this basis. As employment would be offered, irrespective of skill or training, open to all, these circumstances should determine the amount of payment made, which would be strictly in proportion to quantity and quality of work done. Training should be the instrument, ownership the end. In order to leave the fullest benefit to the associated colony, and its members, all subscriptions, whether in money or in labour, should carry with them a corresponding representation in the property and capital of the colony. The syndicate or subscribers initiating the enterprise should be entitled to a cumulative preferential dividend of 5 per cent., which might be invested in the extension of the undertaking, but should not be paid in money until the Reserves' subscriptions and labour-value shares shall have been earned and paid, the subscription at the rate of 5 per cent., and the accredited labour-value at the rate of 15 per cent., for the current year of earning. These sums might also, at the option of the owners, be applied to the extension of the enterprise. As opportunity might offer, these centres might be opened in every county, putting an end, as far as possible, to idleness and vagrancy, and affording practical examples of the principle that "In all labour there is profit."

CHAPTER V.

EMPLOYMENT OF PAUPER LABOUR ON THE LAND WORKHOUSE FARMS—WHAT HAS BEEN AND WHAT MAY BE DONE.

By W. Hazlitt Roberts.

WORKHOUSE farms afford an excellent opportunity for ascertaining whether waste and unskilled labour can be profitably utilised on the land. Our workhouses contain a miscellaneous assortment of people of all ages and both sexes, who belong unmistakably to the class of unemployed. They are not the best specimens of that class, but this only adds to the value of the test, for if *they* can be set to work profitably on the land, surely every other section of the unemployed—capable of working at all—can be put upon it with a much greater prospect of good results.

Part of my business is to show from actual experi-

ence that this problem has already been solved—that where even that least hopeful section of the unemployed to be found in our poorhouses have been judiciously and intelligently set to work on the land, they have been found capable of earning at least a part of their subsistence.

The number of workhouse farms at present in existence is small; but, fortunately, there is ample evidence that the thing can be done, and that, when well done, great success has attended it. In the county of Hants there are, or were at least, three such farms. One was in connection with the New Forest Union at Lyndhurst, and the results here, both with casual and ordinary pauper labour, were distinctly successful. The second farm was at South Stoneham, near Southampton, a large rural union workhouse, with a considerable quantity of land attached to it, which was at least partially cultivated by the inmates, and the produce consumed by them.

The third of these workhouse farms was at Wyke, near Winchester, and that city was included in the union with which it was connected. It was on this latter farm that I gained my personal knowledge and experience on this subject. The farm was only seven acres altogether, two acres being garden ground surrounding the workhouse, and five acres leased by the

guardians at the high rental of £5 an acre, originally for the purpose of training the boys in agricultural work as well as other industrial pursuits. The boys never went there, however, and when I joined the Board, the little farm was being cultivated by hired horse labour, which mode of cultivation was entailing a loss of nearly £40 a year on the guardians, who, at the same time, were buying potatoes for the inmates at £5 per ton, and other vegetables at proportionate rates. On expressing dissatisfaction at this state of things, I was invited to undertake the management of the farm, with the support of a small committee. Horse labour was dispensed with, and the inmates were set to dig the ground as it came to hand. It was then planted, half with potatoes and other vegetables, which were consumed in the house by the inmates, and the other half with barley, which was consumed on the premises by pigs, together with the waste from the house and all the small potatoes and other vegetable refuse. The result was that not only were sufficient potatoes and other vegetables grown to feed the inmates, but there was often a surplus, which was sold in the adjoining town. Some young breeding sows were bought, and a good stock of pigs was got up. These pigs were looked after by the inmates, and very carefully attended to, even at the critical time when they were having their young. This

was done chiefly by the older men, who had come into the house after a life of hard and honest toil. They took great delight in the work. No doubt it greatly helped to relieve the hopeless monotony of their lives. The financial result of this system of management was a clear profit of over £100 a year, after paying the heavy rent of £5 an acre ; that is to say, the labour of the pauper inmates produced this £100 a year, and to that extent relieved the public of the burden of their support—a remarkable result, when the small area of land is considered, showing what can be done by the employment of pauper labour on the land.

It might be objected that these experiments are on altogether too small a scale, and too differently circumstanced to be put forward as adequate examples for large workhouses, such as those of London for instance. The difference, however, is more imaginary than real, and is more a mere matter of size than anything else. There is precisely the same human material to deal with : the same old and ageing men ; the same able-bodied men casually out of employment, or not caring to be employed at all, so long as they can live at the public expense ; the same contingent of unfortunates so mentally or physically constituted that they cannot get their living in any ordinary way, and, having no friends, have no refuge

but the poorhouse ; in fact, just the same classes of people throughout, only in greater numbers.

Moreover, I can adduce one instance, at least, of a farm attached to the workhouse of a town with as large a population as some of the London parishes or unions. The farm is situated at Craiglockhart, Midlothian, and is attached to the Edinburgh Poorhouse. This farm is probably the largest of the kind in existence, being nearly 100 acres. Here I am credibly informed not only are all the vegetables consumed in the house produced on it by the inmates, but all the milk, butter, and other dairy produce. A capital dairy of cows is kept, and a large number of pigs as well.

Much the same system is adopted as on that farm with which I was myself connected. The labour of the inmate is applied to the production of vegetables and other food, primarily for their own consumption. If there is a surplus of any kind it is taken into Edinburgh and sold by inmates, precisely as was done in Hampshire. Much of the work is done by the imbeciles located in the house, which is licensed. No outside labour is employed, nor is any outside market sought, except under the circumstances above referred to.

The chief distinction between the Edinburgh Poorhouse and those of our great metropolitan parishes lies

in its close proximity to agricultural land. Craiglockhart, although only three miles from Edinburgh, is in comparatively open country, but our metropolitan parishes would have to go six or seven times the distance to find land suitable for their purpose. This, of course, involves a separate establishment of some kind, but the buildings to accommodate it need not be of an expensive character. It would also involve the cost and trouble of conveyance to and fro, between the farm and the town workhouse, which, of course, could not be wholly transferred to the country, but by good management this might be reduced to a minimum.

These are the drawbacks, but how great in comparison are the advantages to be set against them. In the first place a saving would be effected in the cost of maintenance of *all* the inmates whether they worked on the farm or not, and the quality of their food would be much improved. The contractors' quarterly accounts would be greatly lessened, and some of them would disappear altogether. In addition to affording profitable and suitable employment for the inmates, these agricultural establishments would open an easy way to some degree of classification among the indoor poor who are now all jumbled up together, good, bad, and indifferent alike, in much too close proximity to be pleasant to the better sort among them—often the

victims of unavoidable misfortune. The lives of many of these latter, particularly aged and ageing men, must be rendered almost unendurable by the enforced contact and companionship, day and night, with the flock of "black sheep" to be found in every poor-house. All those who wished it might be drafted to the farm, where a large proportion of them would be able, by their labour and attention in various little offices connected with it, to much more than repay the cost of any extra care bestowed upon them.

It is also a matter for consideration whether, with farms of adequate size attached to every workhouse, the costly district schools might not, to a large extent, be dispensed with, and the training and education of the children be done at home at first cost, as it were. On these farms, also, would at last be found a suitable domicile for that unfortunate squad of State pensioners to whom reference has more than once been made, *viz.*, the imbecile and mentally deficient of every degree short of actual madness. At the Edinburgh farm even the lunatics are domiciled and set to work, but probably that would be objectionable or, at any rate, objected to, here. But with regard to the first-mentioned class there can be no doubt that a farm of this kind would be the best place in the world for them. Such capacity for work as they possess would here be turned to account in one way and

another to a greater extent than under any other circumstances, whilst the surroundings would be such as to exercise a soothing and wholesome influence upon them.

Again, although the infirmaries for the sick could not, of course, be wholly transferred to these country establishments, an important use might be made of them in connection. Convalescents from the sick wards could be lodged at them both economically and under conditions the most favourable to complete recovery. Nothing is more desirable and, indeed, indispensable in some cases, than for the patient to have a month or two in the country or at the seaside before resuming his ordinary occupation. Such an opportunity might be afforded him on a farm of this kind at very little expense to the public, as he would be able partially to offset the cost of his maintenance by light work suitable to his recovering strength, which no reasonable man could object to do.

These are some of the more palpable advantages to London workhouses of having farms of this kind connected with them, though many more might be added. It only needs to be further pointed out that no enormous outlay, calculated to alarm the rate-payers, is necessarily involved in the matter. Once at the twenty-mile radius, possibly in some cases a little within it, there is plenty of land to be had in

almost every direction at a reasonable price, amply good enough for the purpose, for the cultivation would be of such a nature as to improve rapidly the poorest soil. No more land need be acquired than would be necessary to grow vegetables and maintain a dairy of cows. The only case in which it might be politic to purchase a larger area would be in the event of a compact property in a suitable locality being offered as a whole at a relatively lower price than a smaller area could be obtained at, in which case there could be no possible harm in launching out, as many uses could be found for the surplus land. Except under such circumstances, it would be unadvisable to overload the experiment with superfluous expenditure at the outset, although, if successful, the farms might be so enlarged as to grow wheat and produce meat for the house.

In conclusion, I wish to emphasise the assertion that workhouse farms afford the best opportunity for testing the practicability of utilising waste or unemployed labour on the land. There, in thousands, cooped up within the workhouse walls, are the idle hands waiting to be employed—there is, by consent of the ratepayers, an ample command of funds for the purpose without going round with the hat, which so often comes back empty, and last, but by no means least, there is an assured market for the pro-

duce without interfering with the means of livelihood of any other class of people. If the experiment succeeds, the ratepayers will benefit doubly, for a way will be opened for keeping outside the workhouse walls many who must otherwise sooner or later come in. For all these reasons I hope the day is not far distant when every metropolitan workhouse will have a flourishing farm connected with it.

LAND AND POOR LAW GUARDIANS.

By F. C. Mills.

Towards the close of the year 1892 the guardians of two East End parishes of London, *viz.*, Whitechapel and Stepney, were considering this question from two somewhat different points of view.

In the case of Stepney the workhouse was full, and owing to building operations it was found impossible to carry out a proper classification of labour; at the same time many single men coming from different parts of the country found their way to the workhouse through shelters established in the district. Under these circumstances it was suggested that the guardians should take or buy a farm, but nothing was done until in March, 1893, the Stepney Guardians were invited by the Whitechapel Guardians to join in their deliberations. The Whitechapel Guardians, in consequence of the letter of the Local Government

Board in respect to the unemployed, had revived an Agricultural Training Homes Committee. This committee "started with the proposition that the only means by which guardians could establish an Agricultural Training Home would be by development of the workhouse system. The points, therefore, formulated were (1) whether such a development be expedient; (2) whether an Agricultural Training Home can be best administered in the interest of the struggling poor by a Poor Law authority or by a voluntary body; (3) whether, in the latter event, the home should be in part maintained by capitation payments by guardians, or by subscriptions under the 42 and 43 Vic., cap. 54, sec. 10; (4) whether it should be reserved for 'able-bodied persons of good character, and of apparently solid determination,' or whether it should be open to all comers as a test of such character and determination; (5) what means should be taken for placing men, who may have satisfactorily passed through a period of training in agricultural employment, or possession, or both; or (6) whether the training should have for its object the placing of men and their families in a position of hope and possibility in the colonies."

This committee invited to confer with them Captain Gretton of the East End Emigration Society, who suggested that what was wanted was a farm

where men could be sent for a year at least, and where they would go through all the rotation of work both in the farmyard and in the field, including milking, rough carpentering, etc., to fit them for country life in the colonies.

Inquiries were made of a number of selected farmers and others as to whether men would be received for training with a capitation grant, but the general gist of the answers was that that was quite impracticable.

Mr. Hazell, however, had an interview with the committee, and expressed his readiness to receive men sent to him by the guardians.

Soon after this, and whilst the committee were considering what report they should make to their respective boards of guardians, the English Land Colonisation Society was founded, and Mr. Harold Moore, the treasurer of the society, interviewed the committee, and on behalf of the society stated that they had the offer of taking a farm in Essex on advantageous terms, and submitted to the guardians whether they would be prepared to make payment to the society in respect of such number, not exceeding forty of the able-bodied poor of the union, as might be selected for the colony which the society proposed to found; the places vacated from time to time to be filled up by other men.

He said, "The object of the society is to provide agricultural and other productive work to carry on such industries as are connected with farming, and to introduce other minor industrial employment, which will bring in some return without competing with existing English products, and which may in the future be useful to the men so employed ;" and the committee recommended the guardians to subscribe under the Act 42 and 43 Vic., cap. 54, sec. 10, at expiration of twelve months from the society commencing operations, "a sum based upon a computation of the number of men actually received from the union at a rate of 5s. per head per week ; the guardians to be satisfied by such evidence and means as may be determined that such 'men' are in a destitute condition, and that they have resided in the Whitechapel Union twelve months and upwards, immediately prior to such reception."

"A copy of the foregoing report was, in due course, transmitted to the Local Government Board ; and in response to the request of the guardians for approval, the Board stated that they had given the subject careful consideration, and would be prepared to assent to a subscription to the funds of the society on the basis proposed by the guardians. It was, at the same time, to be understood that the limit of such assent would be one year, and that the persons in respect of

whom the guardians would subscribe would be able-bodied men, who either had been in receipt of relief from the union, or had applied to the guardians for relief, and that they would be sent to the farm on the recommendation of the guardians."

The Stepney Guardians passed a similar resolution, but have taken no further action, as they are waiting until the society is ready with a farm of their own.

The Whitechapel Guardians, however, sent four men from the workhouse to Mr. Hazell's farm, upon the understanding that, after a period of probation, they would be willing to emigrate to Canada. Of the four men sent, one failed to reach his destination, and one subsequently left the farm. The two vacancies were filled up, and there are four men still there. After a lapse of three months, in which satisfactory reports as to conduct were received, the guardians adopted a resolution to assist their emigration. This was, in due course, sent to the Local Government Board, who advised that, as there was a general objection on the part of the Canadian Government to persons being sent to the dominion who had been in receipt of relief in this country, the guardians should communicate with the High Commissioner for Canada, and ascertain whether any objection would be raised in the present instance. As the result of a correspondence, the High Commis-

sioner finally replied that he was unable to encourage the emigration. It is satisfactory, however, to be able to state that the guardians have since succeeded in obtaining the requisite authority, and effecting the emigration of men, under most hopeful conditions, to New Zealand.

Mr. Vallance supplemented the narrative contained in Mr. Mills' paper by saying that the scheme referred to originated with Canon Barnett, who sought the consideration by the guardians of certain "proposals for training able-bodied men in country pursuits by means of the Poor Law." The question was referred to a committee, and entered upon with a due appreciation of its importance, and an anxious desire to ascertain whether Poor Law administration in this country was capable of development in the direction of training the unemployed and destitute poor in agricultural pursuits. The committee recognised the congested condition of the labour market, the gravitation of the unemployed to London and other large centres, the gradual decline of agriculture in England, the dependence of the country upon foreign importations, and the loss of wealth and employment which was involved in the abandonment of the soil. The discussions which ensued, *inter alia*, raised the points whether the scheme would not be more likely to be

successful on Canadian, rather than on English soil—whether, do what guardians might, the stigma of pauperism would not attach to the scheme, seeing that an agricultural settlement would be but a country workhouse under relaxed conditions—and whether, pending an amendment of the land laws, emigration was not the only available remedy for existing distress. Eventually it was decided to invite the guardians of all the metropolitan unions to meet in conference upon the question. They did so; a committee was appointed to collect information from guardians of the poor in Essex, agriculturalists, clergymen and others; but the replies received to their circular letter were not encouraging. As, however, the Mansion House Conference upon the unemployed had, at this stage, reached the opinion that “any experimental scheme of agricultural colonies should be worked by private charity, in co-operation, as far as possible, with the Poor Law, rather than as part of the Poor Law system,” and as a scheme had been actually formulated, offers of land invited and a public appeal for funds made, it was eventually decided by the conference to allow the question to remain in abeyance pending the result of the Mansion House experiment.

This was in 1888, and although this first effort proved abortive, the Whitechapel guardians were led early in

1893 again to take up the question. They started with the proposition that the only means by which guardians could establish an Agricultural Training Home would be by a development of the workhouse system; and accordingly formulated certain points for subsequent consideration.

The committee had the advantage of the personal assistance of such gentlemen as Captain Gretton, Mr. Walter Hazell, and Mr. Trotter, and they were joined by Mr. F. C. Mills, Mr. Bolton Smart, and other representatives of the Stepney Union. The following questions were drafted, and sent out to a number of selected farmers :—

“Assume a Londoner, intelligent, enfeebled by poor living, but with a good physique and some energy, married to a decent wife, and with two or three children.

“Could such a man, with his wife and family, be settled in a hut or cottage in your neighbourhood? Could he, while receiving sufficient for support from London guardians, be worked by you? Could you, that is, give him work on your farm so that he might at a year's end have some skill in digging, rough carpentering, and milking—be, in fact, fit for emigration? Would it be possible to pay you for your trouble by a capitation grant on every man capable of digging, etc., and might it be a condition that during the year so much waste land might be re-

claimed? This last condition is imposed to obviate the substitution of country by London labour."

The replies, as in 1888, were not encouraging. The proposal was either "Utopian," "impracticable," or "illegal." A report was ultimately adopted; but at this stage, Mr. Harold E. Moore, Hon. Treas. of the English Land Colonisation Society, waited upon the committee with the proposal described by Mr. Mills.

The guardians responded to the invitation of the society, and the Local Government Board having consented to an experimental arrangement, the guardians were brought by the society into communication with Mr. Hazell, with the result already referred to by Mr. Mills in his paper. The men who had been trained at Mr. Hazell's farm had markedly improved by their stay, and left England for Canada with expressions of absolute confidence in their power to achieve success. They were animated, too, by brotherly feelings, the one who could read and write undertaking to utilise the voyage out by teaching his companion who could not do so. The conclusion which he (Mr. Vallance) had thus far reached was that the hope of success of agricultural training farms was not in the enlargement of such farms, and the aggregation of an increased number of men upon them, but rather in the multiplication of small farms, such as that of Mr. Hazell.

CHAPTER VI.

SOCIAL REFORM IN RELATION TO AGRICULTURE.

PROPOSAL FOR RURAL UNIVERSITY SETTLEMENTS.

By T. Locke Worthington.

ALL enlightened persons recognise the advantages to the community resulting from the efforts of well-to-do citizens to establish, and carry on in London, institutions known as university settlements. Toynbee Hall in the East End, the well-known Bermondsey Settlement, the Women's University Settlement on the south side of the Thames, and University Hall in the West Central district, form four amongst other such undertakings. They represent the partial fulfilment of an effort to break down class distinctions; the wish of middle-class men and women to live amongst and help a poor working class population; the intention of the promoters being that such middle-class persons should assist by sympathy and instruction in rendering help to those less fortunate

than themselves. I have no intention of describing these town settlements, so well known to most people, but I wish most emphatically to point out, what I can vouch for by personal experience, that the benefit is as great, and perhaps more so, to a resident as to a poor townsman.

Now, much energy and educational effort is wasted in these town settlements owing to the need for all concerned of fresh air and healthy, invigorating exercise, accompanied by the cheerful surroundings of pure country and unblighted nature.

We have forced to the front, by the irresistible pressure of circumstances, the questions of our overpopulated towns and the depopulated country. Much is being done to improve our towns, but no Acts of Parliament, no local government bye-laws, no scientific arrangements to improve the artificial life of cities, will cure the evil of concentration of population, but rather encourage the unfortunate movement.

Again, on all sides we have evidence of the depression of agriculture, and the lack of capital investment upon productive land. We wish to attract the large capitalists to, and encourage the small labour-capitalists upon, the starved land, and to do all that is possible to increase the food production from the soil of this country.

There are a rapidly increasing body of educated members of the middle classes, especially the rising generation of young men, who desire for a time to study this question on the spot, who wish to invest energy, and often also independent means, upon the productive open ground, for the benefit and profit of ALL concerned.

Now, I have a *conviction* that our universities and colleges might exert a considerable direct influence upon the land troubles and agricultural questions of the country. I would urge, therefore, that every English, Scotch, Irish, and Welsh university should found each at least one rural university settlement, and ultimately that the majority of the colleges of the Oxford and Cambridge Universities should have their own farms with accommodation for temporary residential students. The settlements, besides providing a healthy change for town middle-class men and college students, who would be able to study the agricultural and land questions with object lessons on all sides of them, would stimulate the farmers and labourers of the district to activity and enterprise. The much abused middle-class man would learn from the practical farmers and labourers, whilst he would himself add to the intellectual and social interests of the uneducated natives. In addition, I believe that the settlements would encourage home trade with the

towns, and bring much of the dormant capital of cities to the open land.

The sites should be most carefully chosen, and the college farms should, in no sense of the word, overlap each other. Each establishment should be situated, if possible, upon freehold land close to a village, and sufficiently near a station to promote frequent passenger and freight communication with the towns. The arrangement of the buildings would vary according to circumstances, but the expenditure need never be great. A disused farmhouse, duly adapted and fitted up, would, at any rate, to begin with, serve every requirement.

The warden or secretary should be a salaried, practical, experienced farmer with firm organising power, such a man, in fact, as would be competent to guide and modify the theories of young university men towards efficient action.

Technical lectures should be given in order that the members of *four classes* (please note) might learn, *viz.*: the residents, the gentry, the farmers, and the labourers. A select library and useful museum should be instituted at each centre; the advantages of numerous agricultural libraries would be enormous, pamphlets and text books being provided for lending and circulation, whilst the larger treatises and models, etc., would be held for reference.

Besides working for the full development of the powers of the Parish Councils and Allotments Acts, the residents should strive for securing such reforms as the half time system for agricultural children, as are operative in America and Switzerland, making the period extend to fourteen or even fifteen years, and the institution should see to the provision of evening classes for the youth of all ages. Home industries, such as are practised in Bohemia, would be encouraged, so as to materially increase the incomes of small farmers and labourers.

Quite apart from the question of whether they are employed or unemployed, it seems to me quite natural that the abler labourers in rural districts should seek after a more intellectual and fuller life, which, at present, they find in our large towns. It would be the aim of these institutions to organise and improve the educational advantages of the towns in the country districts, not forgetting, above all things, the recreative needs. Our universities, colleges, and schools form the basis of society, and are really the most powerful agencies for guiding the tendencies of the times, and they might do much towards reducing the exodus of residents and workers from country to town.

Lectures and special departments might be provided for by endowment, but much of the work would

be voluntary. On the other hand, if once the freehold were acquired, and the premises adapted and stocked, the undertaking would pay its way, the maintenance being defrayed by the charges for board and lodging.

Such settlements would require *no excessive capital expenditure*, and in many cases vacant farms could be purchased and adapted at a very slight initial cost. I firmly believe that such rural university settlements or *college farms for middle-class men* might prove a very powerful medium towards the improvement of agricultural life and trade.

THE WORK OF THE ENGLISH LAND COLONISATION SOCIETY.

By J. C. Kenworthy.

This paper is in no sense a formal and approved report of the proceedings of our society, but rather an independent statement of what the society has done ; made, however, in such a form that the body of our members will, I think, feel it to be accurate in spirit and fact.

The two problems of agricultural depression and want of employment among labourers, which press upon us at this moment with such profound intensity, were hardly less pressing in August, 1893, when the society was organised under its present constitution. Prior to that time, the society had represented the considerable effort of a number of gentlemen, some of whom are still members with us, to organise a "residential colony" in the neighbourhood of London for middle and lower-middle people who were anxious to escape from the conditions of city life. The enormous and innumerable difficulties which were found to surround that attempt caused, — not precisely the abandonment of the scheme, but a modification and extension of the society's objects in the direction of rousing a general movement for assisting the restoration of the people to the land.

In the reconstruction of the society which followed, the moving spirits were the Rev. Dr. Paton of Nottingham, who, for many years, has written and laboured for a new creation of the English yeoman, and Mr. Harold Moore, whose "Back to the Land" had then recently attracted attention as offering a possible way of escape from the many difficulties surrounding our agriculture. It is but just to say, that had it not been for the motive power imparted by Dr. Paton, and the practical and expert know-

ledge, and really large labours of Mr. Moore, the work of the society would not have been done.

Mr. Joseph King, whose social work, evidenced, for instance, in his connection with Mansfield House University Settlement; Mr. J. S. Trotter, who, for a considerable period, gave his advisory aid at the Hadleigh farm colony; Mr. Herbert Samuel, Mr. P. Anderson Graham (author of "The Rural Exodus"), Mr. John A. Hobson (author of "Problems of Poverty"), and other gentlemen, have from time to time aided our councils. We have received valuable information and help from many gentlemen whose official and professional positions established them as authorities. Also we have had valuable communication with gentlemen engaged in the practical work of restoring labour to the land. It were invidious to mention names; but the programme of this conference, now in your hands, is a fairly full record of the persons and matters with which the society has dealt during its brief existence.

Our council speedily discovered that the problem before us presented two distinct aspects, namely, the provision of work on the land for the unemployed, and the retention on the land of that labour which was then, and is now increasingly, being driven from the land.

Pursuing the first line of investigation, we were able,

with the assistance of Mr. Moore, to issue our "Report upon Farm Labour Colonies and Farm Settlements" in the autumn of last year. Herein such matters of practical detail are dealt with as the character and capacities of the unemployed as ascertained by experience: methods of sorting out the various grades of worth and skill; the powers of boards of guardians to acquire land and means for utilising unemployed labour; methods of establishing and working test-farms and training-farms; and criticism of the various existing tramp and labour colonies and farms. Owing to the necessarily technical nature of this report, it has only made way in the limited area of those who are practically interested in this work of dealing with the unemployed. We are justified, however, in believing that it carried some clear light on the matters treated of into quarters where it may show the way to tangible results in practice.

Following upon this, the council decided to deal more fully with the powers of guardians in finding work for the unemployed. This resulted in the publication, in November, 1893, of the "Suggestions and Notes for Poor Law Guardians concerning the Employment of Men upon the Land." Here, the possibilities of action, and methods of procedure in the founding of farm colonies under the Poor Law,

were fully and, I believe, reliably explained. This was followed up by some lectures in London and the provinces, by a large correspondence, and by a still larger newspaper propaganda, the latter evidenced in one volume of press cuttings. More or less tangible results have evidenced themselves in various parts of the country ; nor is the work thus begun likely to end here, further action at an early date being contemplated.

One result of this work alone would, I venture to believe, justify the existence, labours, and expenditure of the society. I refer to the sanction given by the Local Government Board to the proposal that boards of guardians should be enabled to board out able-bodied paupers upon farm colonies where these existed. This was the work of the society, and has resulted in the despatch of men by the Camberwell, Whitechapel, and other unions, to the Hadleigh colony, and to Mr. Walter Hazell's test-farm, the guardians paying 5s. per week with each man. The principle conceded is really a vast one, and pursued as economic pressure alone must cause it to be, may lead to a large national scheme of finding productive work for the unemployed.

But for the other aspect of the problem. Mr. Moore's book, "Back to the Land," undoubtedly suggested a line of thought and action to which the

public mind was at least awakening. After long discussion our council came to the conclusion that a definite mode of procedure might be entered upon. The motives and outlook of the council are well represented in Dr. Paton's pamphlet, "Home Colonisation : the Need and the Opportunity of our Time."

Those few pages are a plea and a contention for re-establishment of the small holder in our country. Dr. Paton insists with supreme emphasis upon the small "yeoman" cultivator as an essential factor in a healthy society, and claims that his restoration is a moral need and an economic possibility.

To the questionings and denials of the economic possibility of restoring the small holder, the society has seen its way to answer definitely, that the possibility lies in the establishment of co-operative or communal tenure rather than peasant proprietorship, and in co-operative cultivation, where this brings a clear gain. We have our examples, not less than our theories, to support these propositions: both theory and example we are endeavouring to present to the public in the best available form. The society's leaflets, "Management of a Hand-husbandry Farm," "Farm Labour Colonies," and "Co-operative Farm Colony of Small Holders," give various aspects of our proposals. ♦ ♦

An important, and too much neglected, fact, upon

which we have found ourselves often obliged to insist, is, that the present methods of cultivation, induced by our system of land-holding, are wholly unsuited to the scheme of small holdings, and will demand a thorough and drastic reform. The subject of "Thorough Cultivation," experimented in by Sir Arthur Cotton, and advocated by Mr. William Sowerby and others, therefore finds an important place in our programme.

In this endeavour to stimulate the creation of small holdings, we find ourselves confronted by these obvious and unescapable difficulties:—(1) Land is so tied up by our existing land-laws of entail, and others, that both landowner and purchasers, however willing to sell and to buy, find it difficult, sometimes impossible, to come together. (2) The land everywhere is, as a rule, so much out of heart, so depleted of capital, that large expenditure and time is needed to restore the high productivity necessary for the small holder. (3) Agricultural skill is at so low an ebb that only here and there can a man be found competent to fulfil the many labours of small cultivation. (4) The cost of cottages and buildings, which often must be up to a certain standard under the local bye-laws, is so heavy that, with the present market prices for produce, it is only groups in favoured localities who can hope to meet the payments under any system of rent, purchase of their holdings.

This fact has driven, at least, some active members of the society to the conclusion that any scheme of creating small holdings can, under present conditions, only be futile, unless it grapples with the problem of finding a fair and free market for the produce of the holdings. The effort to discover the way to such markets has again pointed to the co-operative system. Answering to the country groups of small holders, some effort must be made to create city groups, amongst whom co-operative supply stores may be opened to dispose of the country produce. The vista here opened is a vast one, and points to nothing less than the possible beginning of an entire alteration in our economic system, which, to judge from its disastrous results, surely needs some such change. Practical work in this direction is already afoot. Mr. Richard Stapley is prepared to bring the colony of small holders, now projected on his estate at Horeham Road, Sussex, into relation with a co-operative centre, now in course of formation at Croydon. The experiment, difficult as it may seem, is at least interesting.

Further, the problem of agricultural credit which has forced itself upon so many minds could not escape the purview of the society. Country banks which suit the large farmer are often positively inimical to the small cultivator, who does not obtain from

them any of that credit which he often needs. This question of banks for small holders, however, has been relegated by the English Land Colonisation Society to the Agricultural Banks Association, lately founded largely by initiative from our society. The importance of creating institutions through which the small cultivator can transact his cash and credit business without risk of falling into the hands of usury, cannot be over-estimated. But briefly, the recommendations of the Agricultural Banks Association amount to this, that co-operation shall be practised in banking, as in land holding and cultivation.

- Again, the question of railway rates is of vital importance. For instance, certain produce, I am told, is brought from France to London through Folkestone at 12s. 6d. per ton; the same produce from Folkestone itself is charged over 20s. per ton. Three miles from a Devonshire village the expense of transit of produce to London is found to be greater than the expense of transit from the Western States of America. Until such almost universal wrong and folly is brought to an end by public control of the railways, there is but little hope for our work on the large scale.

Nevertheless, even now, there are many cases where an estate might be acquired, divided into holdings suitable to the needs of the locality,

furnished with cottages and buildings, and let on rent-purchase terms to suitable persons forming a co-operative group; and this with good hope of benefit to all parties. From an economist's point of view, the rent-value of English soil has almost disappeared, leaving the land with little more than prairie value. Landowners, therefore, may welcome a means of disposing of their depreciated property on fair market terms, perhaps something better, and substantial security for the payments.

On all these matters the public mind is, as far as the labours of the society enable judgment to be formed, exceedingly ill-acquainted with the real nature and facts of the land and labour question; and beyond doubt there is an enormous present sphere of usefulness for any body of men who can, and will, undertake what ought to be the duties of an English Land Colonisation Society. I trust that our labours may yet be in evidence, not only in the spoken and written word of our propaganda, but in actual results of labour restored to the land!

THE END.

APPENDIX A.

THE CENTRAL COUNCIL OF HOME COLONIES AND RURAL INDUSTRIES.

THIS Council, formally constituted in January, 1895, is an outcome of the Conference held at Holborn Town Hall, on October 25th, 1894. Its object is to supply a bond of union between the different Societies and Individuals working in various ways to assist the transference of unemployed individuals from the towns to work in the rural districts, and to stimulate the growth and consumption of products derived from English land. With this object the Council designs to publish information of interest to those working at these reforms in a Quarterly Journal, and to issue from time to time other publications. It also assists new proposals by bringing into closer communication those who may be specially interested in any particular department of work, and in appointing Committees to administer funds for special purposes.

The following is a list of the names and addresses of the various Societies which are at present represented on the Council :—

The Agricultural Banks Association (Palace Chambers, Westminster).

The Allotments and Small Holdings Association (Moor Street, Birmingham).

The Association for Improving the Condition of the People (Glasgow).

The Christian Union for Social Service (186 Aldersgate Street, E.C.).

The English Land Colonisation Society (41 Bedford Row, W.C.).

The Home Colonisation Society (Kendal, Westmoreland).

The Mansion House Unemployed Committee.

The Rural Industries Co-operative Society.

The President of the Council is Mr. R. A. Yerburgh, M.P. The Honorary Secretary is Mr. T. Locke Worthington, and the Offices of the Council are at 7 Carteret Street, Queen Anne's Gate, Westminster.

APPENDIX B.

PROPOSAL FOR TRAINING FARM COLONIES AND SMALL FARM SETTLEMENTS.

By Mr. Mather, M.P.

MR. WILLIAM MATHER, the Member of Parliament for the Gordon division of Lancashire, is one of the members of the Select Committee appointed by Parliament in the spring of 1895 to consider the distress arising from want of employment, and the possible steps which might be taken to remedy or to prevent the same. Mr. Mather has taken much interest in questions dealing with the employment of labour upon the land, and has prepared a scheme embodying definite proposals for submission to this Committee. Up to the time of going to press (April, 1895) this scheme had not been considered by the Committee, who are still engaged upon preliminary evidence. With the consent of the Committee, this scheme has been communicated to the press, and as it embodies proposals of so important a nature, and will give cause to much discussion when submitted for examination by the Committee, it has been deemed useful to append a short summary of the scheme hereto.

Mr. Mather in his preface points out that he not only relied upon his own views, but has availed himself of the experience of others on the question dealt with. He further points out the fact that the difficulties of agriculture at the present time have not been overlooked ; and in drawing up the suggestions which he submits, the large capital necessary for land and buildings, the necessity for the possession of skill as well as some money for working purposes, the different powers of work in various individuals, the varying quality of land, the unoccupied time when labour on the land is unprofitable, and the necessity of the avoidance of competition with existing labour, have all been carefully considered.

The proposals are divided into two distinct parts, Part I. being devoted to the subject of the provision of assistance to the temporarily unemployed working classes who are without money or experience in landed work, and Part II. to the assistance of those who have experience in rural work.

The following is a brief summary of the proposals contained in Part I., which is entitled " Farm Training Colonies " :—

(1) That the State shall advance money for the founding of farm training colonies as an investment, the management to be placed by the Local Government Board in the hands of County Councils.

• (2) That such colonies shall consist partly of land out of cultivation, and partly of land under tillage, to be

worked mainly for arable dairying, but with such other cropping as may give profitable employment for manual labour; the whole working to be under well-trained skilled direction.

(3) That the number of men to be received upon the colony shall be regulated by the area of land; and each man, in addition to doing all the work on the land that is required, in exchange for his maintenance, shall have some auxiliary employment for his own benefit.

(4) That Poor Law authorities be authorised to accept applications for work on the colonies, from men who are not in receipt of Poor Law relief; such applications to be made to specially organised departments, distinct from those which deal with the pauper classes.

(5) That should there be any deficiency in the working of the colonies, each Poor Law authority shall contribute towards the same in proportion to the number of men nominated by it.

References are then made as to the results obtained from the colonies in Germany, Belgium, Holland, France, and Switzerland, as well as to the Hadleigh Colony working in England. From the experience gained from the working of these colonies, certain conditions are recommended which must be observed in order to obtain the best results. These conditions are—(a) the colony for men unskilled in agricultural work must consist mainly of land out of cultivation,

but such land must be of a nature which is capable of profitable cropping when brought under cultivation ; (b) the colony must also contain a considerable proportion of land in good cultivation ; (c) the system of management should be to devote special attention to the production of such crops as can only be profitably dealt with when manual labour is largely available, without, however, excluding the use of steam and mechanical appliances ; and (d) auxiliary industries must be introduced upon the colony, in order that the time when work upon the land is impossible may be profitably employed.

It is then suggested that, provided these conditions be kept in view, every County Council can be authorised to acquire land and erect the necessary buildings, and to receive thereon men of the unemployed working classes, nominated by Poor Law authorities. The majority of these men should be married, but as there would be but little accommodation for women, and only a small proportion of women's work wanted upon the colony, the wife of every man should receive a remittance of not less than 4s. a week, this payment being on account of the value of the industrial work of the man in one of the auxiliary industries.

The advantages claimed for this system are that the money earned would come largely out of the land which the labour of the man had rendered more productive, thus adding to the national wealth, without detracting from the productive labour of any other individual in the nation ; the man and his family

would be sustained by the work of his own hand, and no taint of pauperism could be attached thereto.

It is pointed out that although such a colony be under the control of a County Council, the liability which would arise from his maintenance would be undertaken by the Poor Law authorities, the latter being responsible for the possible deficiency, if any, in proportion to the number of men sent from their union to the colony. It is further pointed out that care must be taken that the saleable products of such a farm do not compete with existing home products ; but must be those which are now met by foreign importation, not because of the lower price of the foreign product, but in consequence of the insufficiency of home production. The crops which would comply with this condition are then mentioned. Explanations then follow as to the auxiliary industries which must be introduced, all of these being of a character which requires but little capital, and can be carried on by intermittent labour ; while the productions therefrom would have to be (*a*) such as are required for use upon the colony, (*b*) such as are not now made in this country, or (*c*) those for which the demand here exceeds the existing supply. As it is estimated that one-third of the time of each man would usually not be necessary for work on the land, but would be available for these auxiliary industries, it is pointed out that during this time all work done on the land, instead of being devoted to these indus-

tries, should, as far as possible, be paid for at the piecework rates current in the district.

The financial possibilities of farm training colonies upon this system, the liabilities and prospects which Poor Law authorities would have in connection with them, and the means the State would have for securing and obtaining a return of the money invested, are then shown by an example. From this it appears that the cost of such a colony to accommodate 200 persons may be estimated at about £30,000, this amount being made up by the purchase of a cultivated farm of 600 acres, a similar area of uncultivated land, capital expenditure upon the last named, the buildings necessary for the colony, furniture and fittings, and the working capital for farm and industries. It is estimated that the returns from such a farm might be placed at £5,400, while the expenses, including tithe, rates, wages of farm manager and skilled labourers, steam cultivation, horse labour, seed, manure, depreciation of implements, cost of administration, and the maintenance of 150 colonists, would come to under £5000 per annum. Taking a minimum yield from the farm, the returns are placed at £4,500, in which case it is admitted there might be a deficiency of £3 for each of the men, or about 1s. 3d. per head per week.

When the whole of the farm was highly cultivated, it would no longer be suitable for a farm training colony; and it is then suggested that the State should offer the property for the permanent settle-

ment in small holdings for those to be assisted, as mentioned in suggestions contained in Part II., who, under the method there suggested, would pay to the State a sum equivalent to the improved value of the property. This improved value, by reason of the labour of the unskilled men, is taken to be as an equivalent to interest for the period during which the property was used as a training colony.

In concluding Part I., it is pointed out that while farm training colonies would offer no attraction as a permanent means of livelihood to those who seek their assistance, they would have great advantages over existing systems of temporary relief, even if the costs were higher and the results less than those suggested in the example. It is, lastly, stated that if in the present year only one-fourth of the amount voted by the State in aid of technical education were given for the purpose of farm training colonies, six of such colonies could be founded at once.

Part II., being suggestions for the assistance of those who may be encouraged to seek a permanent living from the land, is entitled, "Small Farm Settlements." As previously mentioned, any property used for a farm training colony, when fully under cultivation, can be converted into a property for permanent settlement. It is suggested, however, that without waiting for this time to arrive, every County Council should invite applications from those within their county who wish to obtain a permanent living from the land. Farms should then be secured suitable

for division among these applicants, and when the terms for the land, and for its sub-division, had been approved of, the County Council should then recommend a loan, to be made by the State to the trustees of the property, of such an amount as was necessary for laying it out and erecting the buildings.

On such a loan being sanctioned, the trustees would acquire the land and erect the buildings; and the holdings would be allotted to the respective applicants. In order to give adequate security, before possession were given, every applicant would have to undertake to do, within six months of entry, fencing and certain other specified work. He might then take possession either (*a*) on signing an ordinary agreement of tenancy on terms agreed upon by the trustees, or (*b*) on paying at least one-tenth of the cost of the buildings upon his holding, executing at the same time a deed stating the amount remaining due from him, and the annual charge upon it, calculated at 4 per cent. interest; or (*c*) on agreeing to pay annually 6 per cent. interest on the total cost for a term of 25 years, which at the end of that term would discharge his liability in respect of the buildings.

It is suggested that wherever possible the land should be secured on a perpetual lease, because this system would secure to the owner an annual rent on so certain a tenure that it would be saleable without difficulty at short notice at any time, while it would make a less total sum necessary to be advanced by

the State than if the land were purchased, while the occupier would obtain a permanent tenure without any obligation to pay the capital value of the land. If, however, the land had to be purchased by the State, then the money would have to be repaid by an annual charge of $4\frac{1}{4}$ per cent., repaying principal and interest in under 50 years.

An example is given of this suggested system. A suitable farm of 500 acres, it is stated, might be offered on a perpetual lease at £300 per annum. The trustees might apportion this rent at an average of 15s. per acre, thus securing a profit rental in order to provide management charges. An occupier, requiring eight acres of average land with house and buildings, costing £140, would then obtain entry on agreeing to do certain work upon the holding, and undertaking either (a) to pay a rent of £12 per annum for the house and land ; or (b) to make a payment of £15, and sign a mortgage deed for £125 at an annual interest of £5, with a perpetual rent of £6 per annum for the eight acres of land ; or (c) to agree to pay the sum of £9 per annum for a term of 25 years, with a perpetual rent of £6 for the land. If the land had been purchased, then the annual payment would be £2 to £3 in excess of this amount, but would cease at the end of the agreed term.

It is then proposed that the State should also advance to the trustees a sufficient sum to erect central buildings, comprising dairy factory, bacon-curing sheds, fruit and vegetable room, mill, seed stores, and

bakery, the total amount to be so expended not exceeding £1,500 for each settlement, and to be repaid to the State by an annual payment of $5\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., which would provide for interest and principal at the end of a term of 25 years. The charge made for the use of the buildings to be such amount as would meet this annual payment.

It is then pointed out that if the system of loan for the erection of buildings for this class of small occupiers were sanctioned, landowners themselves, without assistance from County Councils, would be willing to form such settlements, and give their personal aid and direction to their formation. It is recommended that in the case of owners erecting these buildings, loans should be granted to them, either permanently at 3 per cent. interest, if not more than two-thirds the cost of erection were required ; or if the loan were made repayable by annual instalments, to cover principal and interest over a term not exceeding 30 years, then the entire cost of such buildings might be lent.

Three questions are then carefully considered. Firstly, as to whether there is a large number of men who would be willing to form these settlements ; secondly, whether the land of England will sustain a largely increased number ; and thirdly, whether there is reasonable ground for expecting that those on these small farm settlements would be able to make a living for themselves and their families. Many facts and figures are stated as bearing upon these points, the conclusions being that, if it be borne in mind that the

production be principally for home consumption, and only partially for competitive sale, that the area be limited to six acres of arable land for any ordinary family, and that adequate capital be provided, then there will be large numbers in this way enabled to be kept in country districts.

It is, however, pointed out that many will require more capital than they have now at command. In order to provide this, it is suggested that the State may provide a sum to be lent to the trustees of each settlement, on condition that a bank be formed on the principles of Herr Raiffeisen, to be lent to the working tenants under most stringent conditions, in order to ensure absolute security.

Even with the assistance named in the last paragraph, there would be many coming from a farm training colony, and desirous to secure a permanent living from the land, who would not have any capital. To any such man it is suggested a particular portion of the land might be allotted, as to a tenant, with the understanding that he should be supplied with the seed, manure, and other articles required for efficiently working the area appropriated to his use, while the trustees would realise his produce, paying him the sum obtained, less the cost of articles supplied by them, and the cost of his maintenance in a farm-house, where these men should be jointly accommodated. By securing harvest wages from a large farmer, or specially remunerative returns from his industrial work, in addition to the profits from the

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land held by him, such men might be enabled, in the course of a short time, to obtain a holding with a house upon it.

Lastly, it is claimed that such a system would be of great utility in checking the flow from our rural districts, and giving a means of maintenance to village mechanics and others who are now gradually joining our unemployed classes.



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